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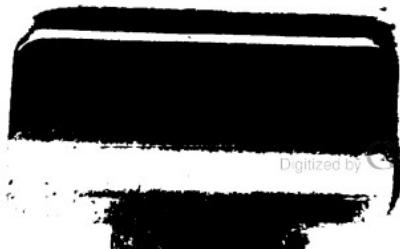
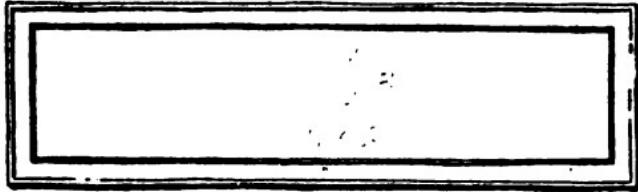
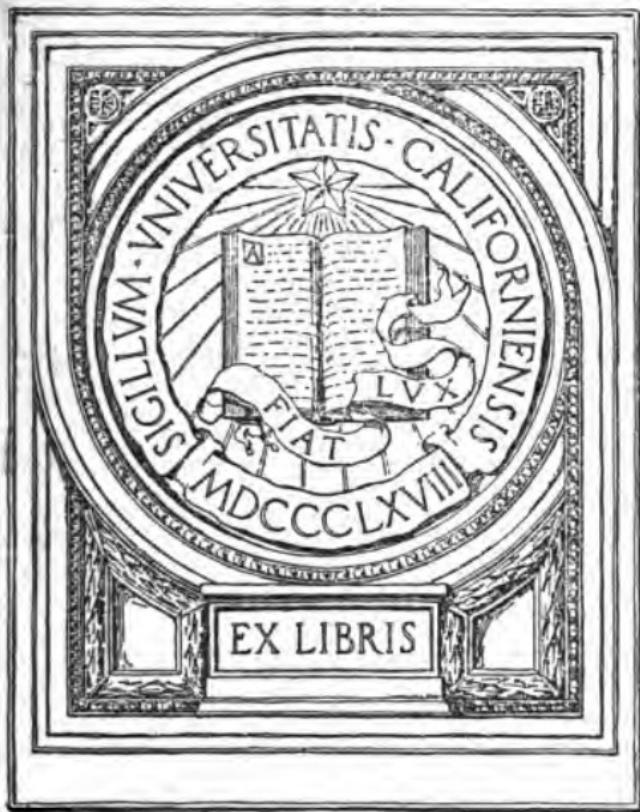
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STREET.
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THE SEASONS.

BY UNION OF
CANADA,
JAMES THOMSON.

WITH

CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS OF VARIOUS AUTHORS ON HIS
GENIUS AND CHARACTER;

AND

NOTES, EXPLANATORY AND CRITICAL,

JAMES ROBERT BOYD,

EDITOR OF THE PARADISE LOST, AND OF YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS,



"The Seasons,"—a poem which casts its spell upon the unfading beauties of Nature, will live as long as the language in which it is written shall be read.

DR. AIKIN.

REVISED EDITION.

NEW YORK:

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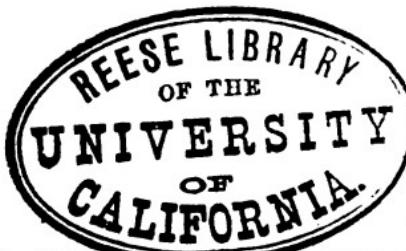
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PLAN AND DESIGN OF THIS EDITION.

IN this age, when the press is covering our land with a frivolous and pernicious literature, there is great danger that the rising generation will too much neglect, if not entirely lose sight of, those noble and solid productions of the British Muse which were familiar to their predecessors—the poems of Milton and Young, of Cowper and Thomson. These are worthy, not of a hasty perusal only, but of frequent and profound study—especially by the young—for the varied information which they contain; for the learning, and taste, and high order of genius which they display, and for the eminent service they are adapted to afford, in the proper culture of the mind and of the heart. The study of such authors, if so far pursued as to secure a fair appreciation of their style, and sentiments, and scientific information, cannot fail to raise the mind above the danger of contaminating and degrading itself with the greatly inferior and the worthless productions so common at the present day. But such an acquaintance with these authors cannot, except in rare instances, be looked for, without the aid of suitable commentaries, that shall clear up obscure passages, call attention to what is beautiful or faulty in style or sentiment, and, in short, give to the immature and uncultivated mind the aid and the incitement which it

needs, to enter into the spirit and feel the force of these productions. In our academies and colleges the poets of Greece and Rome are critically studied ; many years of toil are bestowed upon them ; but it is painful to consider how little attention, on the other hand, is devoted to the English poets, though some of them are not less deserving than the former of study and admiration. It was the earnest desire and hope of leading teachers to give to the best English poets the same high place in a course of education, and the same attention which is given to the Roman and Grecian, that induced me to prepare a critical commentary on the Paradise Lost, and on Young's Night Thoughts, and now upon Thomson's Seasons ; and I cannot doubt, that at no distant day *a thorough and critical study of such works as these will be deemed essential, and will be demanded in all seminaries above the grade of the primary schools.* It is true that even in these the poems alluded to are used extensively ; but, in almost all instances, it is for no higher purpose than grammatical parsing. This, indeed, has its benefits, but there are much higher purposes to be attained in the proper study of these authors, which, it is hoped, may be secured by the diligent study of them in connection with the commentaries now before the public.

Not only in the school-room—in the family circle also—the productions of these distinguished English poets, *explained and illustrated*, are much needed. *Every family library and every district-school library should contain a commentary upon Milton, and Young, and Thomson*, adapted to the wants of the mass of readers.

In my editions of these authors, I have endeavored, by the copiousness and elementary character of many of the notes, to make the study of them *an introduction and*

preparation for the general reading of poetry to advantage—an object of no small importance in the view of any one who duly regards and seeks to promote the refinement of taste, the proper culture of the imagination, and intellectual strength.

Bishop Newton first rendered to the cause of literature and to the general reader, a most important service, by selecting from the papers of Addison, in the Spectator, the criticisms which they contained upon the Paradise Lost, and by distributing them in the form of notes to the various parts of the poem to which they related, that they might conveniently be read in connection with the passage thus illustrated or explained. In the illustration of Thomson, I have adopted the same course, by selecting from the pages of reviews and other works, such valuable criticisms as I have discovered upon "The Seasons," and by distributing them through the poem for the convenience of the reader: so that the notes will be found to embrace a tolerably extensive Cyclopaedia of erudite and tasteful criticism, in reference to this poem, from the pens of some of the most distinguished critics of the present century—no small advantage surely to all who have not access to these original sources, or if they had, have not the time or industry to look them up, as they might be found useful for the better appreciation of the successive portions of the work.

For the convenience of the reader, when taking up the poem for desultory or occasional perusal, *the principal topics have been designated in a conspicuous manner*, so that a selection may be made without difficulty or delay.

That "The Seasons" eminently deserves the labor of criticism and of full illustration, will appear, on considering the vast amount of interesting information of all

kinds that is embodied in it; more especially in regard to natural objects, phenomena, and events. *While it is not devoid of sentiment, genial and refined, its more striking characteristic is the large extent and compass of knowledge which it displays.* I have looked upon it as pre-eminently valuable, from *the fulness and beauty of its teachings in all the prominent departments of Natural History*, and have thought, that, by a somewhat ample explanation of those subjects in the notes, a taste may be formed, or matured, in this interesting branch of study, and a foundation laid for prosecuting it with happy success. The desire is strongly felt, moreover, to encourage and *aid the formation of the habit*, so seldom formed, and yet so valuable, *of connecting with the study of Nature the study of its great Author*: nor can it be doubted that if the youthful mind were trained to take delight in the beauties, sublimities, and ever-varying changes of the physical world, and to connect with its observation of these an habitual recognition of the infinitely wise and beneficent Creator, there would be furnished an unfailing source of profitable entertainment and delight that would strongly *tend to raise the mind above the danger of vicious associations and the pursuit of vicious practices*.

In the language of one of Thomson's eloquent countrymen, it may be added, that "our moral being owes deep obligation to all who assist us to study Nature aright; for, believe us; it is high and rare knowledge to know and to have the true and full use of our eyes. Millions go to the grave in old age without ever having learned it: they were just beginning, perhaps, to acquire it, when they sighed to think that 'they who looked out of the windows were darkened,' and that, while th-

had been instructed how to look, sad shadows had fallen on the whole face of nature, and that the time for those intuitions was gone forever. But the science of seeing has now found favor in our eyes ; and ‘ blessings are with them, and eternal praise,’ who can discover, discern, and describe the least as the greatest of nature’s works ; who can see as distinctly the finger of God in the lustre of the little humming-bird murmuring round a rose-bush, as in that of ‘ the star of Jove, so beautiful and large,’ shining sole in heaven.”

As Natural History, when properly taught, is a history of the works of the Creator, and thus of the glorious attributes concerned in their production ; as these works embrace a boundless variety and magnificence, the proper study and observation of them must tend to ennable and exalt the mind, and to improve one’s character, and to lead us into the angelic pleasure of communion with the Great Author of all good—of all that is beautiful, grand, harmonious, and admirable in creation ; for they

“ Whom Nature’s works can charm, with God himself
Hold converse, grow familiar day by day
With his conceptions, act upon his plan,
And form to his the relish of their souls.”

In the study of nature, the aid of modern science must be diligently employed, to obtain any thing like a full view of her wonderful adaptations, and tendencies, and arrangements—a full view of the astonishing displays of the wisdom, and power, and goodness of the Creator ; and hence, for the uneducated reader, various *scientific explanations of natural objects, phenomena, and operations have been furnished in the notes to this edition.* But it would be difficult to find a more perti-

nent and agreeable illustration of *the great advantage that may be derived, in youth, from the study of Thomson's Seasons*, than Caroline Bowles (afterwards Mrs. Southey) has furnished, in the charming autobiography of her childhood, entitled “The Birth-Day.”

“ And was it chance, or thy prevailing taste,
 Beloved instructress ! that selected first
 (Part of my daily task) a portion short,
 Cull'd from thy ‘Seasons,’ Thomson ?—Happy choice,
 Howe'er directed, happy choice for me ;
 For, as I read, new thoughts, new images
 Thrill'd through my heart, with undefined delight,
 Awakening so the incipient elements
 Of tastes and sympathies, that with my life
 Have grown and strengthened : often on its course,
 Yes—on its darkest moments, shedding soft
 That rich, warm glow they only can impart ;
 A sensibility to Nature’s charms
 That seems its living spirit to infuse
 (A breathing soul) in things inanimate ;
 To hold communion with the stirring air,
 The breath of flowers, the ever-shifting clouds,
 The rustling leaves, the music of the stream ;
 To people solitude with airy shapes,
 And the dark hour, when night and silence reigns,
 With immaterial forms of other worlds ;
 But, best and noblest privilege ! to feel
 Pervading Nature’s all-harmonious whole,
 The great Creator’s presence in his works.”

In his beautiful volume, entitled “The Wanderings of a Pilgrim,” Dr. George B. Cheever offers some observations of his own, and quotes some from the pages of John Foster, that seem highly appropriate to be introduced, in fuller illustration of the subject now in hand. He remarks :—“ We do not con men’s features

alone when we meet them: we learn their habits, thoughts, feelings; we speak to their souls. And Nature hath a soul as well as features. But a man's own soul must be awakened within him, and not his pleasure-loving faculties and propensities merely, if he would enter into communion with the soul that is in nature. Otherwise, it is as with a vacant stare that he sees mountains, forests, bright skies, and sounding cataracts pass before him; otherwise, it is like a sleep-walker that he himself wanders among them. What is not in himself he finds not in nature; and as all study is but a discipline to call forth our immortal faculties, no good will it do the man to range through nature as a study, if his inward being be asleep, if his mind be world-rusted and insensible.

‘It were a vain endeavor
Though I should gaze forever
On that green light that lingers in the west;
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.’

And hence the extreme and melancholy beauty of that passage in John Foster’s writings, where he speaks of *the power of external nature as an agent in our education*, and laments the inward deficiency in many minds, which prevents our ‘foster-mother’ from being able to instil into them her sweetest, most exquisite tones and lessons. ‘It might be supposed,’ he says, ‘that the scenes of nature, an amazing assemblage of phenomena, if their effect were not lost through familiarity, would have a powerful influence on all opening minds, and transfer into the internal economy of ideas and sentiment something of a character and a color correspondent

to the beauty, vicissitude, and grandeur which continually press on the senses. On minds of genius they often have this effect ; and Beattie's Minstrel may be as just as it is a fascinating description of the feelings of such a mind. But on the greatest number this influence operates feebly ; you will not see the process in children, nor the result in mature persons. The charms of nature are objects only of sight and hearing, not of sensibility and imagination. And even the sight and hearing do not receive impressions sufficiently distinct and forcible for clear recollection ; it is not, therefore, strange that these impressions seldom go so much deeper than the senses as to awaken pensiveness or enthusiasm, and fill the mind with an interior permanent scenery of beautiful images at its own command. This defect of fancy and sensibility is unfortunate amid a creation infinitely rich with grand and beautiful objects, which, imparting something more than images to a mind adapted and habituated to converse with nature, inspire an exquisite sentiment, that seems like the emanation of a spirit residing in them. It is unfortunate, I have thought within these few minutes, while looking out on one of the most enchanting nights of the most interesting season of the year, and hearing the voices of a company of persons, to whom I can perceive that this soft and solemn shade over the earth, the calm sky, the beautiful stripes of cloud, the stars, and the waning moon just risen, are all blank and indifferent.' "

Besides the Natural History, most beautifully and poetically treated in this Poem throughout, and its adaptation, from this source, to produce ennobling thoughts of the Creator, and to lead us to the sublime habit of religious communion with him through the medium of

his varied works, there are many other aspects of this noble production that commend it to our careful study, and which will be exhibited in the account that is given in the following pages of the general structure of the Poem, from the skilful pen of Dr. Aikin. To an Essay of this distinguished scholar and critic, on Thomson's Seasons, I have also been indebted for most of the valuable "Remarks" that are placed before each of the "Seasons."

It deserves special notice that *the Poem abounds in brief but admirable sketches of a large number of the most distinguished men of ancient and modern times—philosophers, statesmen, poets, warriors, and kings*: these sketches are rendered more complete and instructive by the supplementary matter furnished in the Notes of the present edition.

The "Critical Observations," *illustrative of the genius and character of the poet*, and which have been carefully gathered from the writings of men of a highly cultivated taste, constitute another feature of this edition which will commend it to the intelligent reader, and prepare him for a more eager and advantageous perusal of this great and noble Poem.

Some disappointment, possibly, may be felt, on observing that no professed memoir of the amiable poet is here provided; but in place of it, I have judged it best, as his life is somewhat barren of incident, to scatter about in the notes such particulars relating to his character and history as were deemed sufficiently interesting; and have thus accomplished the double purpose of exhibiting the poet, and of illustrating at the same time several passages in his Poem. Indeed (as Dr. Murdoch remarks), "as for his more distinguishing qualities

of mind and heart, they are better represented in his writings than they can be by the pen of any biographer. There, his love of mankind, of his country and friends, his devotion to the Supreme Being, founded on the most elevated and just conceptions of his operations and providence, shine out in every page. He took no part in the poetical squabbles which happened in his time, and was respected and left undisturbed by both sides. He would even refuse to take offence when he justly might, by interrupting any personal story that was brought to him, with some jest, or some humorous apology for the offender. Nor was he ever seen ruffled or discomposed, but when he read or heard of some flagrant instance of injustice, oppression, or cruelty: then, indeed, the strongest marks of horror and indignation were visible in his countenance. These amiable virtues, this divine temper of mind, did not fail of their reward. His friends loved him with an enthusiastic ardor, and lamented his untimely fate: the best and greatest men of his time honored him with their friendship and protection."

Among these, the Hon. George Lyttleton expressed his high regard for Thomson in the Prologue which he wrote for the poet's posthumous tragedy of "Coriolanus," in 1749, soon after the author's decease; and which was most feelingly delivered by Mr. Quin, another personal friend of Thomson's. The following lines form a part of the Prologue:

" I come not here your candor to implore
For scenes, whose author is, alas ! no more ;
He wants no advocate his cause to plead ;
You will yourselves be patrons of the dead.
No party his benevolence confined,
No sect ;—alike it flowed to all mankind.

He loved his friends—forgive the gushing tear—
 Alas ! I feel I am no actor here.
 He loved his friends with such a warmth of heart,
 So clear of interest, so devoid of art,
 Such generous friendship, such unshaken zeal,
 No words can speak it, but our tears can tell.
 Oh candid truth, oh faith without a stain—
 Oh manners gently firm, and nobly plain—
 Oh sympathizing love of others' bliss,
 Where will you find another breast like his ?
 Such was the Man—the Poet well you know,
 Oft has he touched your hearts with tender woe :
 Oft in this crowded house, with just applause,
You heard him teach fair Virtue's purest laws ;
For his chaste Muse employ'd her heaven-taught lyre
None but the noblest passions to inspire—
Not one immoral, one corrupted thought—
One line, which dying he could wish to blot."

At the request of Lord Buchan, Robert Burns, the sweet poet of Scotland, prepared the following stanzas in memory of Thomson. The author seems to have felt that they are not equal to the subject he would honor, as he accompanied them with the following statements : “ Your Lordship hints at an Ode for the occasion ; but who would write after Collins ? I read over his verses to the memory of Thomson, and despaired. I attempted three or four stanzas in the way of *Address to the Shade of the Bard*, on crowning his bust. I trouble your Lordship with the inclosed copy of them, which I am afraid will be but too convincing a proof how unequal I am to the task you would obligingly assign me.”

While virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,
 Unfolds her tender mantle green,
 Or pranks the sod in frolic mood,
 Or tunes the Æolian strains between ;

While *Summer* with a matron grace
 Retreats to Dryburgh's cooling shade,
 Yet oft delighted stops to trace
 The progress of the spiky blade ;

While *Autumn*, benefactor kind,
 By Tweed erects her aged head,
 And sees, with self-approving mind,
 Each creature on her bounty fed ;

While maniac *Winter* rages o'er
 The hills whence classic Yarrow flows,
 Rousing the turbid torrent's roar,
 Or sweeping wild a waste of snows ;

So long, sweet poet of the Year,
 Shall bloom that wreath thou well hast won,
 While Scotia with exulting tear
 Proclaims that Thomson was her son.

The beautiful Ode of Collins, to which Burns so modestly alludes above, acquires additional interest from what Dr. Murdock states of its author—that he had lived some time at Richmond, but forsook it when Mr. Thomson died. This event occurred, at Kew Lane, near Richmond, on the 27th day of August, 1748. The poet's remains were interred in Richmond Church, under a plain stone, without an inscription; but in 1792 Lord Buchan placed a small brass tablet in that church, bearing a suitable inscription, and beneath it this beautiful extract from the “Winter:”

“Father of Light and Life ! Thou Good Supreme !
 O teach me what is good !—teach me Thyself !
 Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
 From every low pursuit ! and feed my soul
 With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure ;
 Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss !”

Having already stated the design and nature of my editorial labors, I commend the work to a discerning but candid public, in the hope that it may lend to multitudes essential and needful aid ; enabling them to derive from the reading of the Poem far greater advantage and satisfaction than it could afford them without the annotations which now accompany it—believing, as I do, what one of his biographers has so well expressed, that Thomson's labors, secure from the revolutions of taste or time, are destined to descend with undiminished admiration to the latest posterity ; and that it may with confidence be predicted, that future generations, like the last and the present, will have their reverence for the God of Nature excited, and their earliest attachment to Nature herself strengthened, by the poet who has sung her in all her seasons.

J. R. B.

GENEVA, N. Y.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THOMSON.

BY COLLINS.

The Scene on the Bank of the Thames near Richmond.

In yonder grave a Druid* lies,
 Where slowly winds the stealing wave ;
 The Year's best sweets shall duteous rise
 To deck its Poet's sylvan grave.

In yon deep bed of whispering reeds
 His airy harp† shall now be laid,
 That he whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
 May love through life the soothing shade.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
 And while its sounds at distance swell,
 Shall sadly seem in pity's ear
 To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
 Where Thames in summer wreaths is drest,
 And oft suspend the dashing oar,
 To bid his gentle spirit rest !

And oft, as care and health retire
 To breezy lawn or forest deep,
 The friend shall view yon whitening spire,‡
 And mid the varied landscape weep.

* *Druid.* This name properly belongs only to the priests of ancient Britain, many of whom were poets. They frequented forests—those of oak especially—where they offered sacrifice, and gave instruction to the people. The name is here applied to Thomson, as a native poet—a frequenter of rural scenery, and a worshipper there of the God of Nature.

Cowper, in his *Table-Talk*, has a few lines illustrative of the term now explained :

“ Hence British poets too the priesthood shared,
 And every hallowed Druid was a bard.”

† The *Aolian* harp.

‡ That of Richmond Church, where Thomson was buried.

But thou who own'st that earthy bed,

Ah ! what will every dirge avail ;
Or tears, which love and pity shed,

That mourn beneath the gliding sail.

Yet lives there one, whose heedless eye

Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near ?
With him, sweet bard, may Fancy die,

And joy desert the blooming Year.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide

No sedge-crown'd sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green hill's side,

Whose cold turf hides the buried friend !

And see, the fairy valleys fade,

Dun night has veiled the solemn view :
Yet once again, dear parted shade,

Meek Nature's child, again adieu !

The genial meads, assign'd to bless

Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom ;
Their hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress

With simple hands thy rural tomb.

Long, long, thy stone and pointed clay

Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes :

Oh ! vales and wild-woods, shall he say,

In yonder grave your Druid lies !



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CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS

ON THE GENIUS AND CHARACTER OF THOMSON,

CHIEFLY AS DISPLAYED IN "THE SEASONS."

THE following observations are drawn from an anonymous Memoir of the poet :

Nicholas.

In the whole range of British poetry, Thomson's "Seasons" are perhaps the earliest read, and most generally admired : hence it is not necessary to say much on the peculiar character of a genius so well known and so often discussed. He was the Poet of Nature, and his chief merit consisted in describing her, and the pleasure afforded by a contemplation of her infinite and glorious varieties. Studying her deeply, his mind acquired that placidity of thought and feeling which an abstraction from public life is sure to generate. She was to him, as he has himself said, a source of happiness of which Fortune could not deprive him :

" I care not, Fortune, what you me deny ;
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace ;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face ;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living stream at eve :
Let health my nerves and finer fibres leave,
Of fancy, reason, virtue, naught can me bereave."

His pictures of scenery and of rural life are the productions of a master, and render him the Claude of poets. The "Seasons" are the first book from which we are taught to worship the

goddess to whose service the Bard of Ednam devoted himself; and who is there that has reflected on the magnificence of an extended landscape, viewed the sun as he emerges from the horizon, or witnessed the setting of that glorious orb when he leaves the world to reflection and repose, and does not feel his descriptions rush upon the mind, and heighten his enjoyment?

It has been said that the style of that work is pompous, and that it contains many faults. The remark is partially true. His style is in some places monotonous from its unvaried elevation; but to him Nature was a subject of the profoundest reverence, and he, doubtless, considered that she ought to be spoken of with solemnity; though it is evident, from one of his verses, which is often cited, that he was aware that simplicity is the most becoming garb of majesty and beauty.

Another objection to the "Seasons" is, that they contain frequent digressions, and, notwithstanding that it is made by an authority, from which it may be presumptuous to dissent, the justice of the observation cannot, perhaps, be established. Every one who has read them will admit that the history of Celadon and Amelia, and of Lavinia, for example, have afforded as much pleasure as any other parts; and a poem, descriptive of scenery, storms, and sunshine, requires the introduction of human beings to give it life and animation. A painter is not censured for adding figures to a landscape, and he is only required to render them graceful, and to make them harmonize with his subject. The characters in the "Seasons" are all in keeping: a gleaner is as necessary to a harvest-field, as a lover to a romance; and it seems hypercritical to say that there should be nothing of interest in the lives of the inhabitants of the villages or hamlets which are alluded to. Another test of the soundness of this criticism is, to inquire, whether that work does not owe its chief popularity to those very digressions. Few persons will read a volume, however beautiful the descriptions which it contains, unless they are relieved by incidents of human life; and if it were possible to strip the "Seasons" of every passage not strict-

ly relevant, they would lose their chief attractions, and soon be thrown aside.

One charm of poetry is, that it often presents a vivid picture of the idiosyncrasy of an author's mind, and this is most conspicuous in the episodes to the immediate subject of his labors. The chain of thought which led him astray may not unfrequently be discovered, and it is on such occasions, chiefly, that those splendid emanations which become aphorisms to future ages are produced. Genius seems then to cast aside all the fetters which art imposes, and individual feeling, usurping for the moment entire dominion, the lady who has cheered his hopes, or the coquette who has abandoned him, his friend or his enemy, as either may occur to his imagination, is sure to be commemorated in words glowing with the fervor of inspiration. Whilst he pursues the thread of his tale, we are reminded of the poet alone, and though we may admire his skill, it is only when he breaks upon us in some spontaneous burst of passion that we sympathize with the man, and are excited to kindred enthusiasm.

The opinions of Dr. Samuel Johnson are next submitted :

As a writer, Thomson is entitled to one praise of the highest kind : his mode of thinking, and of expressing his thoughts, is original. His blank verse is no more the blank verse of Milton, nor of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauses, his diction are of his own growth, without transcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he always thinks as a man of genius. He looks round on nature and on life with the eye which nature bestows only on a poet—the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute. The reader of the “Seasons” wonders that he never saw before what

Thomson shows him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomson impresses.

His is one of the works in which blank verse seems properly used. Thomson's wide expansion of general views, and his enumeration of circumstantial varieties, would have been obstructed and embarrassed by the frequent intersection of the sense, which is the necessary effect of rhyme.

His descriptions of extended scenes and general effects bring before us the whole magnificence of nature, whether pleasing or dreadful. The gayety of Spring, the splendor of Summer, the tranquillity of Autumn, and the horror of Winter, take, in their turns, possession of the mind. The poet leads us through the appearances of things as they are successively varied by the vicissitudes of the year, and imparts to us so much of his own enthusiasm, that our thoughts expand with his imagery and kindle with his sentiments. Nor is the naturalist without his part in the entertainment; for he is assisted to re-collect and to combine, to range his discoveries, and to amplify the sphere of his contemplation.

The great defect of the "Seasons" is want of method; but for this I know not that there was any remedy. Of many appearances subsisting all at once, no rule can be given why one should be mentioned before another; yet the memory wants the help of order, and curiosity is not excited by suspense or expectation.

His diction is in the highest degree florid and luxuriant, such as may be said to be to his images and thoughts, "both their lustre and their shade;" such as invest them with splendor, through which, perhaps, they are not always easily discerned. It is too exuberant, and sometimes may be charged with filling the ear more than the mind.

The highest praise which he has received ought not to be suppressed. It is said by Lord Lyttleton, in the Prologue to his posthumous play, that his works contained

Allan Cunningham, a neighbor of Robert Burns, a vigorous prose writer, a composer of Scottish verses, and an editor of several poetical works, has furnished in his excellent biography of Thomson, the following estimate of his characteristics as a poet, and of the "Seasons" as one of his best productions :

Thomson is an original poet of the first order ; and what is not always true of originality, one of the most popular in our literature. In loftiness of thought, and poetic glow of language, few have reached him : the march of his Muse is in mid-air ; she rarely alights, but moves on, continuous and sustained ; and in this constant elevation he resembles Spenser more than any other poet ; in sweetness of fancy, in gentleness of soul, and in the natural love of the beautiful and good, the same resemblance may be found.

Though a scholar, and familiar with all the resources of ancient lore, he rarely allowed learning to get the better of nature : he preferred, he said, finding his poetry in the great volume which Heaven had opened in earth, and air, and sky, to seeking it, with the eyes of others, in the pages of a book ; and confessed that he found it more laborious to imitate the beauties of his brethren in song, than to see them in nature, and draw them for himself. His heart was full of the true spirit of poetry, and his speech was song ; his verse is now and then colored, as one flower is by the neighborhood of another, with the hue of classic thought ; but he saw all by the charmed light of his own imagination, and purified his taste rather by contemplating the sublime sculptures of Greece and the scriptural pictures of Italy, than by the numbers of Homer, or the graces of Virgil.

The origin of his "Seasons" has been sought for, but not found, in the vast body of ancient and modern verse. Other poets have loved the shade of the groves ; the odor of the flowers, the song of the birds, the melody of streams, the fra-

grance of fruit-trees and green fields, the warmth of the sun, the splendor of the moon and stars ; but no poet, save the inspired one who wrote the eighth Psalm, attempted, like Thomson, to raise the beauties of nature out of the low regions of sensual delight, and make them objects of moral grandeur and spiritual contemplation. Thomson perceived order, unity, and high meaning in the loveliest as well as the loftiest things : he loved to observe the connection of the animate with the inanimate ; the speechless with the eloquent ; and all with God. He saw testimony of heavenly intelligence in the swelling sea, the dropping cloud, and the rolling thunder ; in earthquake and eclipse ; as well as in the presence of Spring on the fields, of Summer on the flowers, of Autumn in her golden harvest, and of Winter in her frosty breath and her purifying tempests.

As the seasons are in nature, so he sung them, and in their proper order. The poet seems not to have erred (in regard to method), as the critic (Dr. Johnson) imagines : he has truly observed the great order of the seasons, and followed the footsteps of Nature, without ascribing to one period of the year what belongs to another ; while he has regarded storms and tempests, earthquakes and plagues, as common to all seasons, and employed them accordingly. His language has been called, by high authorities, swelling and redundant ; but Thomson, with other great poets, held that a certain pomp and measured march of words was necessary to elevate verse which sung of the humble toils of the shepherd, the husbandman, and the mechanic ; and though Campbell prefers the idiomatic simplicity of Cowper, and Coleridge his chastity of diction, to the unvaried pomp of Thomson, yet both confess their preference of the latter, as a lofty and born poet. I believe this conclusion will be that of all who can feel the power, the glow, and the upward flame-like spirit of his poetry.

From Chambers' Cyclopaedia of English Literature the succeeding account of Thomson is selected :

The publication of the "Seasons" was an important era in the history of English poetry. So true and beautiful are the descriptions in the poem, and so entirely do they harmonize with those fresh feelings and glowing impulses which all would wish to cherish, that a love of Nature seems to be synonymous with a love of Thomson. It is difficult to conceive a person of education, imbued with an admiration of rural or woodland scenery, not entertaining a strong affection and regard for that delightful poet, who has painted their charms with so much fidelity and enthusiasm. The same features of blandness and benevolence, or simplicity of design, and beauty of form and color, which we recognize as distinguishing traits of the natural landscape, are seen in the pages of Thomson, conveyed by his artless mind as faithfully as the lights and shades on the face of creation. No criticism or change of style has, therefore, affected his popularity. We may smile at sometimes meeting with a heavy monotonous period, a false ornament, or tumid expression, the result of an indolent mind working itself up to a great effort, and we may wish the subjects of his description were sometimes more select and dignified ; but this ~~drawback~~ does not affect our permanent regard or general feeling : our first love remains unaltered, and Thomson is still the poet with whom some of our best and purest associations are indissolubly joined. In the "Seasons" we have a poetical subject poetically treated—filled to overflowing with the richest materials of poetry, and the emanations of benevolence. In the "Castle of Indolence" we have the concentration or essence of those materials applied to a subject less poetical, but still affording room for luxuriant fancy, the most exquisite art, and still greater melody of numbers.

The power of Thomson, however, lay not in his art, but in the exuberance of his genius, which sometimes required to be disciplined and controlled. The poetic glow is spread over all.

He never slackens in his enthusiasm, nor tires of pointing out the phenomena of nature, which, indolent as he was, he had surveyed under every aspect till he had become familiar with all. Among the mountains, vales, and forests, he seems to realize his own words—

Man superior walks
Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
And looking lively gratitude.

But he looks also, as Johnson has finely observed, “with the eye which nature bestows only on a poet—the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute.” He looks also with a heart that feels for all mankind. His sympathies are universal. His touching allusions to the condition of the poor and suffering, to the helpless state of bird and beast in winter; the description of the peasant perishing in the snow, the Siberian exile, or the Arab pilgrims—all are marked with that humanity and true feeling which shows that the poet’s virtues “formed the magic of his song.”

The ardor and fulness of Thomson’s descriptions distinguish them from those of Cowper, who was naturally less enthusiastic, and who was restricted by his religious tenets, and by his critical and classically formed taste. The diction of the “Seasons” is at times pure and musical; it is too elevated and ambitious, however, for ordinary themes; and where the poet descends to minute description, or to humorous or satirical scenes (as in the account of the chase and fox-hunter’s dinner in “Autumn”), the effect is grotesque and absurd. Mr. Campbell has happily said that, “as long as Thomson dwells in the pure contemplation of nature, and appeals to the universal poetry of the human breast, his redundant style comes to us as something venial and adventitious—it is the flowing vesture of the Druid; and perhaps, to the general experience, is rather imposing; but

when he returns to the familiar narratives or courtesies of life, the same diction ceases to seem the mantle of inspiration, and only strikes us by its unwieldy difference from the common costume of expression." Cowper avoided this want of keeping between his style and his subjects, adapting one to the other with inimitable ease, grace, and variety; yet only rising in one or two instances to the higher flights of Thomson.

To no critic upon Thomson's genius, and upon the "Seasons," have I been more largely indebted than to Prof. Wilson (lately the distinguished occupant of the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh), as will be discovered on reading the notes to this edition. Besides the admirable criticisms from his pen which are there introduced, the following paragraphs will be read with interest and gratification:

Thomson's genius does not—very, very often—though often—delight us by exquisite minute touches in the description of nature—like that of Cowper. It loves to paint on a great scale—and to dash objects off sweepingly by bold strokes—such, indeed, as have almost always marked the genius of the mighty masters of the lyre, and the rainbow! Cowper sets nature before your eyes—Thomson before your imagination. Which do you prefer? Both. Be assured these poets had pored night and day upon nature, in all her aspects, and that she had revealed herself equally to both. But they, in their religion, delighted in different modes of worship—and both were worthy of the mighty mother. In one mood of mind we love Cowper best; in another, Thomson. Sometimes the "Seasons" are almost a "Task"—and sometimes the Task is out of season. There is a delightful distinctness in all the pictures of the Bard

of Olney; glories gloom or glimmer in most of those of the Bard of Ednam. Cowper paints trees; Thomson, woods. Thomson paints, in a few wondrous lines, rivers from source to sea, like the mighty Burrampooter; Cowper, in many no very wondrous lines, brightens up one bend of a stream, or awakens our fancy to the murmur of some single waterfall.

To what era, pray, did Thomson belong; and to what era, Cowper? To none. Thomson had no precursor—and, till Cowper, no follower. He effulged all at once, sun-like—like Scotland's storm-loving, mist-enamored sun, which, till you have seen on a day of thunder, you cannot be said ever to have seen the sun. Cowper followed Thomson merely in time. We should have had the "Task," even had we never had the "Seasons." These two were "heralds of a mighty train issuing;" add them, then, to the worthies of our own age,—and they belong to it,—and all the rest of the poetry of the modern world—to which add that of the ancient—if multiplied by ten in quantity—and by twenty in quality—would not so variously, so vigorously, so magnificently, so beautifully, and so truly image the form and pressure, the life and spirit of the mother of us all—Nature. Are, then, the "Seasons" and the "Task" great poems? Yes.—Why? We presume you need not be told that that poem must be great, which was the first to paint the rolling mystery of the Year, and to show that all its seasons were but "the varied God." The idea was original and sublime; and the fulfilment thereof so complete, that some six thousand years having elapsed between the creation of the world and of that poem, some sixty thousand, we prophesy, will elapse between the appearance of that poem and the publication of another equally great, on a subject external to the mind, equally magnificent.

tures on the English Poets, will now be added—as contributing to the completeness of a full and exact portraiture of the idiosyncrasies of Thomson's mind, and style as a descriptive poet.

Thomson is the best of our descriptive poets; for he gives most of the poetry of natural description. Others have been quite equal to him, or have surpassed him, as Cowper, for instance, in the picturesque part of his art, in marking the peculiar features and curious details of objects; no one has yet come up to him in giving the sum-total of their effects, their varying influences on the mind. He does not go into the minutiæ of a landscape, but describes the vivid impression which the whole makes upon his own imagination; and thus transfers the same unbroken, unimpaired impression to the imagination of his readers. The colors with which he paints seem yet breathing, like those of the living statue in the Winter's Tale. Nature, in his descriptions, is seen growing around us, fresh and lusty as in itself. We feel the effect of the atmosphere, its humidity or clearness, its heat or cold, the glow of Summer, the gloom of Winter, the tender promise of the Spring, the full over-shadowing foliage, the declining pomp and deepening tints of Autumn. He transports us to the scorching heat of vertical suns, or plunges us into the chilling horrors and desolation of the frozen zone. We hear the snow drifting against the broken casement without, and see the fire blazing on the hearth within. The first scattered drops of a vernal shower patter on the leaves above our heads, or the coming storm resounds through the leafless groves. In a word, he describes not to the eye alone, but to the other senses, and to the whole man. He puts his heart into his subject, writes as he feels, and humanizes whatever he touches. He makes all his descriptions teem with life and vivifying soul. His faults were those of his style—of the author and the man; but the original

genius of the poet, the pith and marrow of his imagination, the fine natural mould in which his feelings were bedded, were too much for him to counteract by neglect, or affectation, or false ornaments. It is for this reason that he is, perhaps, the most popular of all our poets, treating of a subject that all can understand, and in a way that is interesting to all alike, to the ignorant or the refined, because he gives back the impression which the things themselves make upon us in nature. "That," said a man of genius, seeing a little shabby, soiled copy of Thomson's Seasons lying on the window-seat of an obscure country ale-house—"That is true fame!"

THE PLAN AND CHARACTER OF THE "SEASONS."

FOR the discriminating and highly illustrative observations that follow upon this topic, I am indebted to the pen of Dr. Aikin, the accomplished editor of the British Poets; having extracted them from an Essay which he prepared expressly for an elegant edition of the Poem. It will be seen, also, that most of the Remarks introductory to the several "Seasons" have been drawn from the same Essay. Whoever shall give these contributions from his able pen a careful perusal, will be compensated for the labor by a comprehensive and accurate view, and a deep impression, also, of what Thomson designed and successfully accomplished in this immortal Poem.

That Thomson's "Seasons" is the original whence our modern descriptive poets have derived that more elegant and correct style of painting natural objects which distinguishes them from their immediate predecessors, will, I think, appear evident to one who examines their several casts and manners. That none of them, however, have yet equalled their master; and that his performance is an exquisite piece, replete with beauties of the most engaging and delightful kind, will be sensibly felt by all of congenial taste; and perhaps no poem was ever composed which

addressed itself to the feelings of a greater number of readers. It is, therefore, on every account, an object well worthy the attention of criticism; and an inquiry into the peculiar nature of its plan, and the manner of its execution, may be an agreeable introduction to a reperusal of it in the elegant edition now offered to the public.

This was the first capital work in which natural description was professedly the principal object. To paint the face of nature as changing through the changing seasons; to mark the approaches, and trace the progress of these vicissitudes, in a series of landscapes all formed upon images of grandeur or beauty; and to give animation and variety to the whole, by interspersing manners and incidents suitable to the scenery, appears to be the general design of this poem.

Although each of the "Seasons" appears to have been intended as a complete piece, and contains within itself the natural order of beginning, middle, and termination, yet, as they were at length collected and modelled by their author, they have all a mutual relation to each other, and concur in forming a more comprehensive whole. The annual space in which the earth performs its revolution round the sun is so strongly marked by nature for a perfect period, that all mankind have agreed in forming their computations of time upon it. In all the temperate climates of the globe, the four seasons are so many progressive stages in this circuit, which, like the acts in a well-constructed drama, gradually disclose, ripen, and bring to an end, the various business transacted on the great theatre of Nature. The striking analogy which this period, with its several divisions, bears to the course of human existence, has been remarked and pursued by writers of all ages and countries. Spring has been represented as the youth of the year—the season of pleasing hope, lively energy, and rapid increase. Summer has been resembled to perfect manhood—the season of steady warmth, confirmed strength, and unremitting vigor. Autumn, which, while it bestows the rich products of full maturity, is

yet ever hastening to decline, has been aptly compared to that period when the man, mellowed by age, yields the most valuable fruits of experience and wisdom, but daily exhibits increasing symptoms of decay. The cold, cheerless, and sluggish Winter has almost without a metaphor been termed the decrepit and hoary old age of the year. Thus the history of the Year, pursued through its changing seasons, is that of an individual, whose existence is marked by a progressive course from its origin to its termination. It is thus represented by our poet. This idea preserves a unity and connection through his whole work; and the accurate observer will remark a beautiful chain of circumstances in his description, by which the birth, vigor, decline, and extinction of the vital principle of the year, are pictured in the most lively manner.

This order and gradation of the whole runs, as has been already hinted, through each division of the poem. Every season has its incipient, confirmed, and receding state, of which its historian ought to give distinct views, arranged according to the succession in which they appear. Each, too, like the prismatic colors, is indistinguishably blended in its origin and termination with that which precedes and which follows it; and it may be expected from the pencil of an artist to hit off these mingled shades so as to produce a pleasing and picturesque effect. Our poet has not been inattentive to these circumstances in the conduct of his plan. His Spring begins with a view of the season as yet unconfirmed, and partaking of the roughness of Winter; and it is not till after several steps in gradual progression, that it breaks forth in all its ornaments, as the favorite of Love and Pleasure. His Autumn, after a rich prospect of its bounties and splendors, gently fades into "the sere, the yellow leaf," and with the lengthened night, the clouded sun, and the rising storm, sinks into the arms of Winter. It is remarkable, that in order to produce something of a similar effect in his Summer, a season which, on account of its uniformity of character, does not admit of any strongly marked gradations, he has comprised the whole

of his description within the limits of a single day, pursuing the course of the sun from its rising to its setting. A summer's day is, in reality, a just model of the entire season. Its beginning is moist and temperate ; its middle, sultry and parching ; its close, soft and refreshing. By thus exhibiting all the vicissitudes of Summer under one point of view, they are rendered much more striking than could have been done in a series of feebly contrasted and scarcely distinguishable periods.

Every grand and beautiful appearance in nature that distinguishes one portion of the annual circuit from another, is a proper source of materials for the Poet of the Seasons. Of these, some are obvious to the common observer, and require only justness and elegance of taste for the selection ; others discover themselves only to the mind opened and enlarged by science and philosophy. The most vivid imagination cannot paint to itself scenes of grandeur equal to those which cool science and demonstration offer to the enlightened mind. Objects so vast and magnificent as planets rolling with even pace through their orbits, comets rushing along their devious track, light springing from its unexhausted source, mighty rivers formed in their subterranean beds, do not require, or even admit, a heightening from the fancy. The most faithful pencil here produces the noblest pictures ; and Thomson, by strictly adhering to the character of the Poet of Nature, has treated all these topics with a true sublimity, which a writer of less knowledge and accuracy could never have attained. The strict propriety with which subjects from Astronomy and the other parts of Natural Philosophy are introduced into a poem describing the changes of the seasons, need not be insisted on, since it is obvious that the primary cause of all these changes is to be sought in principles derived from these sciences. They are the groundwork of the whole ; and establish that connected series of cause and effect, upon which all those appearances in nature depend, from whence the descriptive poet draws his materials.

The correspondence between certain changes in the animal and

vegetable tribes, and those revolutions of the heavenly bodies which produce the vicissitudes of the seasons, is the foundation of an alliance between Astronomy and Natural History, that equally demands attention, as a matter of curious speculation and of practical utility. The astronomical calendar, filled up by the Naturalist, is a combination of science at the same time pregnant with important instruction to the husbandman, and fertile in grand and pleasing objects to the poet and philosopher. Thomson seems constantly to have kept in view a combination of this kind ; and to have formed from it such an idea of the economy of Nature, as enabled him to preserve a regularity of method and uniformity of design through all the variety of his descriptions. We shall attempt to draw out a kind of historical narrative of his progress through the seasons, as far as this order is observed. [This portion of the Essay has been distributed to the several Seasons, under the head of Introductory Remarks.]

But the rural landscape is not solely made up of land and water, and trees, and birds, and beasts ; Man is a distinguished fire in it ; his multiplied occupations and concerns introduce themselves into every part of it ; he intermixes even in the wildest and rudest scenes, and throws a life and interest upon every surrounding object. Manners and character, therefore, constitute a part even of a descriptive poem ; and in a plan so extensive as the history of the Year, they must enter under various forms, and upon numerous occasions.

The most obvious and appropriate use of human figures in pictures of the Seasons, is the introduction of them to assist in marking out the succession of annual changes by their various labors and amusements. In common with other animals, man is directed in the diversified employment of earning a toilsome subsistence by an attention to the vicissitudes of the seasons, and all his diversions in the simpler state of rustic society are also regulated by the same circumstance. Thus a series of moving figures enlivens the landscape, and contributes to stamp on each

scene its peculiar character. The shepherd, the husbandman, the hunter, appear in their turns; and may be considered as natural concomitants of that portion of the yearly round which prompts their several occupations.

But it is not only the bodily pursuits of man which are affected by these changes; the sensations and affections of his mind are almost equally under their influence; and the result of the whole, as forming the enamored votary of Nature to a peculiar cast of character and manners, is not less conspicuous. Thus the Poet of the Seasons is at liberty, without deviating from his plan, to descant on the varieties of moral constitution, and the power which external causes are found to possess over the temper of the soul. He may draw pictures of the pastoral life in all its genuine simplicity; and, assuming the tone of a moral instructor, may contrast the peace and felicity of innocent retirement with the turbulent agitations of ambition and avarice.

The various incidents, too, upon which the simple tale of rural events is founded, are very much modelled by the difference of seasons. The catastrophes of Winter differ from those of Summer; the sports of Spring, from those of Autumn. Thus, little historic pieces and adventures, whether pathetic or amusing, will suggest themselves to the poet; which, when properly adapted to the scenery and circumstances, may very happily coincide with the main design of the composition.

The bare enumeration of these several occasions of introducing draughts of human life and manners, will be sufficient to call to mind the admirable use which Thomson, throughout his whole poem, has made of them. He, in fact, never appears more truly inspired with his subject than when giving birth to those sentiments of tenderness and beneficence, which seem to have occupied his whole heart. A universal benevolence extending to every part of the animal creation, manifests itself in almost every scene he draws; and the rural character, as delineated in his feelings, contains all the softness, purity, and simplicity that are feigned of the golden age.

But there is a strain of sentiment of a higher and more digressive nature, with which Thomson has occupied a considerable portion of his poem. The fundamental principles of Moral Philosophy, ideas concerning the origin and progress of government and civilization, historical sketches, and reviews of the characters most famous in ancient and modern history, are interspersed through various parts of the Seasons. The manly, liberal, and enlightened spirit which this writer breathes in all his works, must ever endear him to the friends of truth and virtue; and, in particular, his genuine patriotism and zeal in the cause of liberty will render his writings always estimable to the British [and American] reader.

There is another source of sentiment to the Poet of the Seasons, which, while it is superior to the last in real elevation, is also strictly connected with the nature of his work. The genuine philosopher, while he surveys the grand and beautiful objects everywhere surrounding him, will be prompted to lift his eye to the great Cause of all these wonders,—the Planner and Architect of all this mighty fabric, every minute part of which so much awakens his curiosity and admiration. The laws by which this Being acts, the ends which He seems to have pursued, must excite his humble researches; and in proportion as he discovers infinite power in the means, directed by infinite goodness in the intention, his soul must be wrapped in astonishment, and expanded with gratitude. The economy of Nature will, to such an observer, be the perfect scheme of an all-wise and beneficent mind; and every part of the wide creation will appear to proclaim the praise of its great Author. Thus a new connection will manifest itself between the several parts of the universe, and a new order and design will be traced through the progress of its various revolutions.

Thus is planned and constructed a Poem, which, founded as it is upon the unfading beauties of Nature, will live as long as the language in which it is written shall be read.

S P R I N G.

SPRING.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

SPRING is characterized as the season of the renovation of nature; in which animals and vegetables, excited by the kindly influence of returning warmth, shake off the torpid inaction of Winter, and prepare for the continuance and increase of their several species. The vegetable tribes, as more independent and self-provided, lead the way in this progress. The poet, accordingly, begins with representing the reviviscent plants emerging, as soon as genial showers have softened the ground, in numbers "beyond the power of botanists to reckon up their tribes." The opening blossoms and flowers soon call forth from their winter retreats those industrious insects which derive sustenance from their nectarious juices. As the beams of the sun become more potent, the larger vegetables, shrubs, and trees unfold their leaves; and, as soon as a friendly concealment is by their means provided for the various nations of the feathered race, they joyfully begin the course of laborious, but pleasing occupations, which are to engage them during the whole season. The delightful series of pictures, so truly expressive of that genial spirit that pervades the spring, which Thomson has formed on the variety of circumstances attending the Passion of the Groves, cannot escape the notice and admiration of the most negligent eye. Affected by the same soft influence, and equally indebted to the renewed vegetable tribes for food and shelter, the several kinds of quadrupeds are represented as concurring in the celebration of this charming season with conjugal and parental rights.

Even Man himself, though from his social condition less under the dominion of physical necessities, is properly described as partaking of the general ardor. Such is the order and connection of this whole book, that it might well pass for a commentary upon a most beautiful passage in the philosophical poet, Lucretius (Lib. I. 251–262), who certainly wanted nothing but a better system and more circumscribed subject, to have appeared as one of the greatest masters of description in either ancient or modern poetry.



Spring.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed.—Inscribed to the Countess of Hertford.—The Season is described as it affects the various parts of Nature, ascending from the lower to the higher; with digressions arising from the subject.—Its influence on inanimate Matter, on Vegetables, on brute Animals, and last on Man; concluding with a dissuasive from the wild and irregular passion of Love, opposed to that of a pure and happy kind.

COME, gentle SPRING, ethereal Mildness, come ;
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veil'd in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.

1. *Come, &c.*: Spring is here poetically addressed as a person, and invited to come forth from a rain-cloud, amidst the music of birds awaking from the long silence of winter, and “veiled in a shower of shadowing roses,” because these are among the most beautiful products of the season. She is described also as *ethereal Mildness*, to indicate her peculiarly gentle character in contrast with the stern rigor of the season that precedes her.

The exuberance of Fancy displayed in this first paragraph greatly offends the critical taste of Hazlitt, who, with his usual extravagance, remarks, that Thomson “fills up the intervals of true inspiration with the most vapid and worthless materials, pieces out a beautiful half-line with a bombastic allusion, or overloads an exquisitely natural sentiment or image with a cloud of painted, pompous, cumbrous phrases, like the *shower of roses* in which he represents the Spring, his own lovely, fresh, and innocent Spring, as descending to the earth.” “Who” (he adds), “from such a flimsy, roundabout, unmeaning commencement as this, would expect the delightful, unexaggerated, home-felt descriptions of

O Hertford, fitted or to shine in courts
 With unaffected grace, or walk the plain
 With innocence and meditation join'd
 In soft assemblage, listen to my song,

5

natural scenery, which are scattered in such unconscious profusion through this and the following cantos! For instance, the very next passage is crowded with a set of striking images."

It will be a sufficient offset to the above effusion of Hazlitt concerning this introduction to "Spring," to place beside it the observations of Prof. Wilson, the distinguished poet and critic of Scotland. "That picture is indistinctly and obscurely beautiful to the imagination, and there is not a syllable about sex—though '*ethereal Mildness*,' which is an impersonation, and hardly an impersonation, must be, it is felt, a virgin goddess, whom all the divinities that dwell between heaven and earth must love. Never, to our taste, had poem a more beautiful beginning. It is not simple; nor ought it to be: it is rich, and even gorgeous—for the bard came to his subject full of inspiration; and as it was the inspiration, here, not of profound thought, but of passionate emotion, it was right that music at the very first moment should overflow the page, and that it should be literally strewed with roses. An imperfect impersonation is often proof positive of the highest state of poetical enthusiasm. The forms of nature undergo a half-humanizing process under the intensity of our love, yet still retain the character of the insensate creation, thus affecting us with a sweet, strange, almost bewildering, blended emotion that scarcely belongs to either separately, but to both together clings as to a phenomenon that only the eye of genius sees, because only the soul of genius can give it a presence—though afterwards all eyes dimly recognize it, on its being shown to them, as something more vivid than their own faint experience, yet either kindred to it, or virtually one and the same."

One of the most remarkable characteristics of this poem is the great frequency and beauty of the instances of Personification, or Prosopopœia, which it contains—a figure of speech in which the external form, the sentiments, the language, or acts, of an animated, sentient being are attributed to an inanimate, irrational one. For a second example, we have to look no farther than to the eleventh line, where commences an admirable personification of Winter. A much more full and perfect instance, however, is furnished at the opening of "Summer"—to which the reader is referred.

The several parts of this poem are not arranged in the order of their original publication, which was the following:—Winter, Summer, Spring, Autumn. These made their appearance, respectively, in the years 1726, 1727 1728, and 1730.

Which thy own Season paints ; when Nature all
Is blooming and benevolent, like thee.

10

And see where surly WINTER passes off, X

Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts :

His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,

The shatter'd forest, and the ravaged vale ;

While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch,

Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost,

The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.

15

As yet the trembling year is unconfirm'd,

And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,

Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets]

20

Deform the day delightless : so that scarce]

The progress of man's life (says Cunningham) has often been compared to that of the Year ; and Thomson, it is likely, regarded this subject in that light, when, at the happy suggestion of Mallet, he resolved to unite the four "Seasons" into one continuous poem ; making "hoary Winter" the conclusion, and infant Spring the commencement. On Spring he therefore calls ; she descends, amid moisture from above, and music from below ; and as she comes, Winter withdraws his snow from the hill, and his winds from the leafless woods, and leaves with reluctance the scene to his successor—(27-43).

5. *O Hertford* : The Countess of Hertford, to whom this "Season" was originally dedicated by the poet. She was the wife of Algernon, then Earl of Hertford, afterwards Duke of Somerset. To her generous intercession Savage the poet, condemned for murder, owed his pardon. She was not only a patroness of poets, but herself the writer of several poems in Dr. Watts' Miscellanies, there attributed to Eusebia. Her letters to Dr. Isaac Watts, published in the Elegant Epistles, vol. v., give us a favorable opinion of her piety, amiableness, and intellectual culture. Thomson's Dedication intimates that his "Spring" was written under the encouragement, and in the hope of her needed patronage. He had the honor of passing one summer as a guest at her country seat, it being usually her practice to invite some poet to pass that season with her, to aid her in her poetical studies. She was an intimate friend of the devout Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe. The compliments which Thomson pays to her, both in the original dedication and in the text, appear not to have been undeserved. His previous publication of Winter was the means of securing to him her favorable regard, besides that of several other distinguished characters.

X The bittern knows his time, with bill ingulf'd,
 To shake the sounding marsh ; or from the shore
 The plovers, when to scatter o'er the heath,
 And sing their wild notes to the list'ning waste.

25

INFLUENCE OF SPRING ON INANIMATE MATTER.

X At last from Aries rolls the bounteous Sun,
 And the bright Bull receives him. Then no more
 Th' expansive atmosphere is cramp'd with cold ;
 But, full of life and vivifying soul,
 Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them thin, 30
 Fleecy, and white o'er all surrounding heaven.
 Forth fly the tepid airs ; and unconfined,
 Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.

22. The *bittern* belongs to the class of birds called *Grallæ*, or Waders, having very long legs, which fit them to wade in water. The genus *Ardeidæ* embraces Cranes, Storks, and Herons. These latter differ from cranes in being carnivorous ; also in having larger bills and longer legs. They have also more beautiful plumage and elegant crests. They build their nests in company, usually in trees near river-banks, but generally feed and live apart. They live chiefly upon fish, which they secure by piercing them with their long and sharp bills. To the heron tribe belong the *bittern* and the *egret*, both of which are natives of Britain.

24. The *plover* tribe belongs also to the Waders, but it is less aquatic than most of the other species. They occupy, for the most part, sandy and unsheltered shores or upland moors. They congregate in flocks, and run at a rapid rate. They live on worms, which they bring towards the surface of the ground by patting on it with their feet. The *plover* is not confined to Britain, but is widely distributed.

26. *Aries* : That portion of the Zodiac which the Sun appears to enter on the 21st of March. The next Sign which receives him, a month afterwards, is Taurus, or the *bright Bull*, so called from the brilliancy of the stars in and near it.

30. *Sublime*, for sublimely. It is a practice with poets frequently to use the adjective adverbially, to modify the idea expressed by the verb or phrase to which it may stand related. It is a very convenient and beautiful peculiarity of our language that it admits of such a substitution.

- Joyous, th' impatient husbandman perceives
Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers 35
Drives from their stalls, to where the well-used plough
Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.
There unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring lark. 40
Meanwhile incumbent o'er the shining share
The master leans, removes th' obstructing clay,
Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.
While thro' the neighboring fields the sower stalks,
With measured step; and liberal throws the grain 45
Into the faithful bosom of the ground.
The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the scene. ✓
Be gracious, Heaven ! for now laborious man X
Has done his part. Ye fostering breezes, blow ;
Ye softening dews, ye tender showers, descend ! 50
And temper all, thou world-reviving Sun,
Into the perfect year ! Nor ye, who live ✓
In luxury and ease, in pomp and pride,
Think these lost themes, unworthy of your ear :
Such themes as these the rural Maro sung | 55

43. *Winds the whole work* : The English method of ploughing consists in first running a furrow through the centre of a field, and then taking off successive furrows on either side by passing with the plough round and round that first furrow.

46-52. "The farmer now commits his seed-corn to the furrow ; the harrow follows, and shuts the scene ; and the poet calls on lenient airs and gentle warmth to bring their aid to the labors of man."

55. *Maro* : Publius Virgilius Maro, the great Latin poet, author of the *Aeneid* and the *Georgics*, was born B. C. 70, in the village of Andes, near Mantua, in Italy. His "Georgics" is an exquisite and most elaborate poem, treating upon Agriculture, and one that greatly interested the Emperor Augustus. In allusion to this, his most finished production, and to his Eclogues, or Pastoral Poems, our author very properly styles him the *rural poet*.

From the time of Romulus (says Dunlap) to that of Cœsar, agriculture

To wide-imperial Rome, in the full height

Of elegance and taste, by Greece refined.

In ancient times, the sacred plough employ'd
The kings, and awful fathers of mankind.

And some, with whom compared your insect tribes

60

Are but the beings of a summer's day,

Have held the scale of empire, ruled the storm

Of mighty war; then, with unwearied hand,

Disdaining little delicacies, seized

The plough, and greatly independent lived.

65

Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough!

had been the chief care of the Romans. Its operations were conducted by the greatest statesmen, and its precepts inculcated by the profoundest scholars. The long continuance, however, and cruel ravages of the civil wars, had now occasioned an almost general desolation. In these circumstances, Mæcenas resolved, if possible, to revive the decayed spirit of agriculture, to recall the lost habits of peaceful industry, and to make rural improvement, as it had been in former times, the prevailing amusement among the great; and he wisely judged that no method was so likely to contribute to these important objects as a recommendation of agriculture by all the insinuating charms of poetry. At his suggestion, accordingly, Virgil commenced his *Georgics*—a poem as remarkable for majesty and magnificence of diction as the Eclogues are for sweetness and harmony of versification.

60. *And some, &c.*: Among other instances may be mentioned the familiar one of L. Quintius Cincinnatus, who was engaged in ploughing his own fields when called to the Dictatorship at Rome, and after delivering his country from great peril, and enjoying a great military triumph at Rome, in a few days returned contentedly to the quiet of his farm. American history can produce many examples of elevation to the highest offices from the pursuits of agriculture; and of a dignified descent, when the term of office had expired, to rural retirement. Washington is the most illustrious instance.

66. *Venerate the plough*: In the early and best days of the Roman Republic (says Dr. Duncan), the plough was venerated; and often was it followed by consuls and laurelled commanders. While commerce, with its subsidiary arts, was despised, the cultivation of the soil was thought in every respect worthy of Roman dignity; and hands that one day swayed the rod of empire, on the next were guiding the plough in some suburban farm. We see a Cincinnatus and a Fabricius, notwithstanding

And o'er your hills and long withdrawing vales,
 Let Autumn spread his treasures to the Sun,
 Luxuriant and unbounded. As the sea,
 Far through his azure turbulent domain, ✓ 70
 Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
 Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports ;
 So with superior boon may your rich soil,
 Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour
 O'er every land, the naked nations clothe,
 And be th' exhaustless granary of a world | 75

INFLUENCE OF SPRING ON VEGETABLE MATTER.

{ Nor only through the lenient air this change X
 Delicious breathes : the penetrative Sun,
 His force deep darting to the dark retreat
 Of vegetation, sets the steaming Power y 80
 At large, to wander o'er the verdant earth,
 In various hues ; but chiefly thee, gay green !
 Thou smiling Nature's universal robe ! |
 United light and shade ! where the sight dwells
 With growing strength and ever new delight. ↗ 85
 From the moist meadow to the wither'd hill,
 Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs,
 And swells and deepens to the cherish'd eye.

standing their warlike glory, devoted to agriculture, as if it were the great business of their lives; and a Cato testifying his love of that noblest of the arts, by writing an elaborate treatise on rustic affairs.

80. *Steaming Power*: This epithet is applied to vegetation, or the principle of growth in plants and trees, and is poetically represented as wandering over the earth in various hues, after its wintry confinement in the frozen ground. It is difficult to determine why it should be called the *steaming Power*, unless from the fact that it comes forth or develops itself, under the warming influences of the spring sun, in the midst of vapor and exhalations from the earth.

X The hawthorn whitens, and the juicy groves
 Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
 Till the whole leafy forest stands display'd,
 In full luxuriance, to the sighing gales ;
 Where the deer rustle through the twining brake,
 And the birds sing conceal'd. At once array'd
 In all the colors of the flushing year,
 By Nature's swift and secret working hand,
 The garden flows, and fills the liberal air
 With lavish fragrance ; while the promised fruit
 Lies yet a little embryo, unperceived,
 Within its crimson folds. Now from the town, 90
Buried in smoke, and sleep, and noisome damps,
Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
 Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling drops
 From the bent bush, as through the verdant maze
 Of sweetbriar hedges I pursue my walk ; 95
 Or taste the smell of dairy ; or ascend
 Some eminence, Augusta, in thy plains,
 And see the country, far diffused around,
 One boundless blush, one white-empurpled shower
 Of mingled blossoms ; where the raptured eye 100
 Hurries from joy to joy, and, hid beneath
 The fair profusion, yellow Autumn spies

89. *The hawthorn* : This shrub or small tree is much used for hedges, particularly in Great Britain, and adds greatly to the beauty of the rural districts.

93. *The twining brake* : This is a species of fern, delighting in a moist soil and shady places. The kind here referred to is one that *twists* or winds the stem around neighboring objects.

100. *The town* : Reference is probably made to London, to which the description pre-eminently answers, and where, it is well known, the poet passed much of his time after he became an author.

107. *Augusta* : Some rural district, perhaps, in the vicinity of London ; or it may stand for London itself, the ancient Latin name of which was *Augusta Trinobantum*. The description of the vernal scene presented in the following lines is exceedingly graphic.

If, brush'd from Russian wilds, a cutting gale
 Rise not, and scatter from his humid wings
 The clammy mildew ; or, dry blowing, breathe
 Untimely frost ; before whose baleful blast
 The full-blown Spring through all her foliage shrinks
 Joyless and dead, a wide dejected waste.

115

For oft, engender'd by the hazy north,
 Myriads on myriads, insect armies warp
 Keen in the poison'd breeze ; and wasteful eat,
 Through buds and bark, into the blacken'd core,
 Their eager way. A feeble race ! yet oft
 The sacred sons of vengeance ; on whose course
 Corrosive Famine waits, and kills the year.

120

To check this plague, the skilful farmer chaff,
 And blazing straw before his orchard burns ;
 Till, all involved in smoke, the latent foe
 From every eranny suffocated falls :
 Or scatters o'er the blooms the pungent dus—
 Of pepper, fatal to the frosty tribe :
 Or, when th' envenom'd leaf begins to curl
 With sprinkled water drowns them in their nest :
 Nor, while they pick them up with busy b—
 The little trooping birds unwisely scares.

125

130

135

120. *Warp* : Thus Milton—

“A pitchy cloud

Of locusts warping on the eastern wind.”—*Par. Lost*, Bk. i., 340.

124. *Sacred sons of vengeance* : Insects, by their vast numbers and voracity, often make dreadful havoc on the fruits and foliage, such as not unfrequently has produced the calamity of famine and of pestilence. Sacred History supplies many instances in which the insect tribes have been made the instruments of Divine Providence in chastising guilty nations for their immoralities and idolatry. Secular history is also full of similar examples, in which the insect races have been constituted the “sacred sons of vengeance.”

135. The important offices performed by little birds in devouring destructive insects deserve remark ; while, on the other hand, it may be observed, that various kinds of insects render service to man by the

- Be patient, swains ; these cruel-seeming winds
 Blow not in vain. Far hence they keep repress'd
 Those deep'ning clouds on clouds, surcharged with rain,
 That, o'er the vast Atlantic hither borne
 In endless train, would quench the summer blaze, 140
 And, cheerless, drown the crude unripen'd year.
 X The north-east spends his rage ; he now shut up
 Within his iron cave, th' effusive south
 Warms the wide air, and o'er the void of heaven
 Breathes the big clouds, with vernal showers distent. 145
 As first, a dusky wreath they seem to rise,
 Scarce staining ether ; but, by swift degrees,
 In heaps on heaps, the doubling vapor sails
 Along the loaded sky, and mingling deep
 Sits on the horizon round a settled gloom : 150
 Not such as wintry storms on mortals shed,
 Oppressing life ; but lovely, gentle, kind,
 And full ~~of~~ every hope and every joy,
 The wish of Nature. Gradual sinks the breeze
 Into a perfect calm ; that not a breath 155
 Is heard to quiver through the closing woods,
 Or rustling turn the many-twinkling leaves
 Of aspen tall. Th' uncurling floods, diffused
 In glassy breadth, seem through delusive lapse
 Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all, 160
 And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks

removal of decomposing substances that would poison the air and induce diseases. As an example of the capacity which some possess for such a service, it is said that, as a consequence of individual voracity and rapid increase of numbers, three flesh-flies and their immediate progeny, according to a calculation made by Linnæus, are able to devour the carcass of a horse in less time than a lion could do it. It may be added, that a check is happily put upon the excessive multiplication of insects, by the attacks made upon them by other tribes of animals, and by their wars upon their own tribes.

Drop the dry sprig, and mute imploring eye ✓
 The falling verdure. Hush'd in short suspense,
 The plumy people streak their wings with oil,
 To throw the lucid moisture trickling off ;
 And wait th' approaching sign to strike, at once,
 Into the general choir. Even mountains, vales,
 And forests seem impatient to demand
 The promised sweetness. Man superior walks
Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
And looking lively gratitude. At last,
 The clouds consign their treasures to the fields ;
 And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool
Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow,
 In large effusion, o'er the freshen'd world.

170

The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard
 By such as wander through the forest walks,
 Beneath th' umbrageous multitude of leaves.
 But who can hold the shade, while Heaven descends
 In universal bounty, shedding herbs
 And fruits and flowers on Nature's ample lap ?
 Swift Fancy fired anticipates their growth ;
 And, while the milky nutriment distils,
 Beholds the kindling country color round. .
 Thus, all day long, the full-distended clouds
 Indulge their genial stores, and well-shower'd earth
 Is deep enrich'd with vegetable life ;
 Till, in the western sky, the downward sun
 Looks out, effulgent, from amid the flush
 Of broken clouds, gay-shifting to his beam.
 The rapid radiance instantaneous strikes
 Th' illumined mountain, through the forest streams,

175

180

185

190

167-184. Rain is now required to help the quickening fruits, and the poet paints, with singular beauty, the birds in the wood, the cattle on the hill, and the thirsty fields themselves, desiring the fall of the now gathering shower.—O.

Shakes on the floods, and in a yellow mist,
 Far smoking o'er th' interminable plain,
 In twinkling myriads lights the dewy gems. | 195

Moist, bright, and green, the landscape laughs around,
 Full swell the woods: their very music wakes,
 Mix'd in wild concert with the warbling brooks
 Increased, the distant bleatings of the hills,
 And hollow lows responsive from the vales; 200
 Whence blending all, the sweeten'd zephyr springs.
 Meantime, refracted from yon eastern cloud,
 Bestriding earth, the grand ethereal bow
 Shoots up immense; and every hue unfolds,
 In fair proportion running from the red 205
 To where the violet fades into the sky.

Here, awful Newton, the dissolving clouds
 Form, fronting on the sun, thy showery prism;
 And to the sage-instructed eye unfold
 The various twine of light, by thee disclosed 210
 From the white mingling maze. Not so the boy:
 He wondering views the bright enchantment bend
 Delightful o'er the radiant fields, and runs
 To catch the falling glory; but amazed,

207. *Awful Newton*: So called from the *uncommon respect* which his great talents and discoveries command and inspire. The fact that white light is not simple, but compounded of seven colors, he verified by means of a glass prism: he resolved the *various twine*, or twist, or combination of the rays that compose white light—*the white commingling maze*. The prism of nature is the falling shower, the *dissolving clouds*, acting upon which, the sun produces the magnificent spectrum of the Rainbow. The speculations of the uneducated boy upon this brilliant phenomenon are finely described. Later philosophers have shown that the seven colors are modifications of three primary colors, red, yellow, and blue.

Among the smaller poems of Thomson is one composed in memory of this great English philosopher, in the preparation of which his friend Gray is said to have furnished him with such an account of the Newtonian philosophy as guarded him against error in his treatment of the subject.

- Beholds th' amusing arch before him fly, 215
 Then vanish quite away. Still night succeeds,
 A soften'd shade, and saturated earth
 Awaits the morning beam, to give to light,
 Raised through ten thousand different plastic tubes,
 The balmy treasures of the former day. 220
- Then spring the living herbs, profusely wild,
 O'er all the deep-green earth, beyond the power
 Of botanist to number up their tribes ;
 Whether he steals along the lonely dale,
 In silent search ; or, through the forest, rank 225
With what the dull incurious weeds account, ?
 Bursts his blind way ; or climbs the mountain rock,
 Fired by the nodding verdure of its brow.
 With such a liberal hand has Nature flung
 Their seeds abroad, blown them about in winds,
 Innumerous mix'd them with the nursing mould,
 The moistening current, and prolific rain. 230
- But who their virtues can declare ? who pierce,
 With vision pure, into these secret stores
 Of health and life and joy ? the food of man,
While yet he lived in innocence, and told 235
A length of golden years ; unflesh'd in blood,
A stranger to the savage arts of life,
Death, rapine, carnage, surfeit, and disease :
The lord, and not the tyrant, of the world. 240

NB
 225-6. *The forest rank with, &c.*: That is, filled luxuriantly with what dull, incurious persons account as weeds.

233. *Their virtues*: The virtues, or valuable properties and uses, of the various families of herbs previously alluded to.

237. *Unflesh'd in blood*: Not accustomed to the use of blood. The term is taken from the dialect of sportsmen, who are in the practice of training dogs or hawks to the business they pursue, by feeding them with the game they take, or other flesh. That this is the meaning put upon the expression by our author, is plain from what follows.

THE GOLDEN AGE, OR MAN IN A STATE OF INNOCENCE.

The first fresh dawn then waked the gladden'd race
 Of uncorrupted man, nor blush'd to see
 The sluggard sleep beneath its sacred beam ;
 For their light slumbers gently fumed away,
 And up they rose as vigorous as the sun,
 Or to the culture of the willing glebe,
 Or to the cheerful tendance of the flock.

Meantime the song went round ; and dance and sport,
 Wisdom and friendly talk, successive, stole

Their hours away ; while in the rosy vale
 Love breathed his infant sighs, from anguish free,
 And full replete with bliss ; save the sweet pain,
 That, inly thrilling, but exalts it more.

Nor yet injurious act, nor surly deed,
 Was known among those happy sons of Heaven ;
For reason and benevolence were law.

Harmonious Nature too look'd smiling on ;
 Clear shone the skies, cool'd with eternal gales,
 And balmy spirit all. The youthful sun
 Shot his best rays, and still the gracious clouds
Dropp'd fatness down ; as o'er the swelling mead,

244. *Their light slumbers gently fumed*, exhaled away, or came to an easy and gradual termination. We are here reminded of the slumbers of Adam and Eve, while yet innocent, as described by Milton, at the opening of Book V. of the Paradise Lost.

Now morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
 Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
 When Adam waked, so custom'd ; for his sleep
 Was aerly light, from pure digestion bred
 And temp'rare vapors bland, which th' only sound
 Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
 Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
 Of birds on every bough.

261. *Dropp'd fatness down* : A beautiful expression, borrowed from the Hebrew bard, and indicating the fertilizing influences of the clouds, or of the rains they let fall upon the earth. The reader is referred to Psalm lxv. 9-12.

The herds and flocks, commixing, play'd secure.
 This when, emergent from the gloomy wood,
 The glaring lion saw, his horrid heart
 Was meeken'd, and he join'd his sullen joy ; 265
 For music held the whole in perfect peace :
 Soft sigh'd the flute ; the tender voice was heard,
Warbling the varied heart ; the woodlands round
 Applied their choir ; and winds and waters flow'd
 In consonance. Such were those prime of days. 270

THE IRON AGE ; OR MAN IN A STATE OF DEPRAVITY.

in Augustus conflagratus

But now those white unblemish'd manners, whence
 The fabling poets took their Golden Age,
 Are found no more amid these Iron Times,
 These dregs of life ! Now the distemper'd mind
 Has lost that concord of harmonious powers, 275
 Which forms the soul of happiness ; and 'all X Isaac
 Is off the poise within : the passions all
 Have burst their bounds ; and reason, half extinct,
Or impotent, or else approving, sees
The foul disorder. Senseless, and deform'd,
 Convulsive Anger storms at large ; or, pale 280
 And silent, settles into fell revenge.
 Base Envy withers at another's joy,
 And hates that excellence it cannot reach.
 Desponding Fear, of feeble fancies full, 285
 Weak and unmanly, loosens every power.
 Even Love itself is bitterness of soul,
 A pensive anguish pining at the heart ;
 Or, sunk to sordid interests, feels no more
 That noble wish, that never cloy'd desire, 290
 Which selfish joy disdaining, seeks alone

270. *Prime*, or first, of days : *Prime* is a favorite expression of Milton.

To bless the dearer object of its flame.

Hope sickens with extravagance ; and Grief,
Of life impatient, into Madness swells ;
Or in dead silence, wastes the weeping hours.

295

These, and a thousand mix'd emotions more,
From ever changing views of good and ill.
Form'd infinitely various, vex the mind

With endless storm ; whence, deeply rankling grows
The partial thought, a listless unconcern,
Cold, and averting from our neighbor's good ;
Then dark Disgust, and Hatred, winding wiles,
Coward Deceit, and ruffian violence.

300

At last, extinct each social feeling, fell
And joyless Inhumanity pervades
And petrifies the heart. Nature disturb'd
Is deem'd vindictive, to have changed her course.

305

Hence, in old dusky time, a deluge came ;
When the deep-cleft disparting orb, that arch'd
The central waters round, impetuous rush'd,
With universal burst, into the gulf,

310

And o'er the high-piled hills of fractured earth
Wide dash'd the waves, in undulation vast ;
Till, from the centre to the streaming clouds,
A shoreless ocean tumbled round the globe.

315

309-15. This passage will not bear a critical examination, though its general import may be easily comprehended. By *deep-cleft* *disparting orb* the author means the external shell or crust of the earth separating in deep fissures, and thus affording a passage to the *central waters* which he supposes to occupy the whole interior of the globe. The rush of waters elevates certain portions of the *fractured earth*, forming *high-piled hills*, over which *dash'd the waves* on a stupendous scale, so that from the centre of the earth to the very clouds a wide and deep waste of waters was formed. He represents the *disparting orb* as *rushing*, or moving forward, impetuously into the gulf, or ocean beds. We must consider him as meaning that the *waters* from the *disparted orb*, and not the *orb itself*, rushed into the gulf.

CHANGES CONSEQUENT UPON THE DELUGE.

The Seasons since have, with severer sway,
Oppress'd a broken world : the Winter keen
Shook forth his waste of snows ; and Summer shot
His pestilential heats. Great Spring, before,
Green'd all the year ; and fruits and blossoms blush'd, 320
In social sweetness, on the self-same bough.
Pure was the temperate air ; an even calm
Perpetual reign'd, save what the zephyrs bland. *Meltemi.*
Breathed o'er the blue expanse ; for then nor storms
Were taught to blow, nor hurricanes to rage. 325
Sound slept the waters ; no sulphureous glooms
Swell'd in the sky, and sent the lightning forth ;
While sickly damps, and cold autumnal fogs,
Hung not, relaxing, on the springs of life.
But now, of turbid elements the sport, 330
From clear to cloudy toss'd, from hot to cold,
And dry to moist, with inward-eating change,
Our drooping days are dwindled down to naught,
Their period finish'd ere 'tis well begun.

CENSURE UPON THE USE OF ANIMAL FOOD. *Indulgence*

And yet the wholesome herb neglected dies ; 335
Though with the pure exhilarating soul
Of nutriment and health and vital powers,
Beyond the search of art, 'tis copious bless'd.
For, with hot ravine fired, ensanguined man

333. *Dwindled down, &c.* : A satisfactory reason can be given for this physical change. The longevity of the antediluvians led to that enormous wickedness, on account of which they were swept from the earth. The great abbreviation of the period of human life since the deluge, and the uncertainty of reaching even that moderate limit, greatly tend to prevent maturity in crime, and to awaken a becoming regard to our religious interests, and to our condition in a future world. *Digitized by Google*

Is now become the lion of the plain, 340
 And worse. The wolf, who from the nightly fold
 Fierce drags the bleating prey, ne'er drunk her milk,
 Nor wore her warming fleece ; nor has the steer,
 At whose strong chest the deadly tiger hangs,
 E'er plough'd for him. They too are temper'd high, 345
 With hunger stung and wild necessity ;
 Nor lodges pity in their shaggy breast.
 But Man, whom Nature form'd of milder clay,
 With every kind emotion in his heart,
 And taught alone to weep ; while from her lap 350
 She pours ten thousand delicacies, herbs,
 And fruits, as numerous as the drops of rain
 Or beams that gave them birth ; shall he, fair form !
 Who wears sweet smiles, and looks erect on heaven,
 E'er stoop to mingle with the prowling herd, 355
 And dip his tongue in gore ? The beast of prey,
 Blood-stain'd, deserves to bleed ; but you, ye flocks,
 What have you done ; ye peaceful people, what,
 To merit death ? you, who have given us milk
 In luscious streams, and lent us your own coat 360
 Against the Winter's cold ? And the plain ox,
 That harmless, honest, guileless animal,
 In what has he offended ? He, whose toil,
 Patient, and ever ready, clothes the land
 With all the pomp of harvest ; shall he bleed, 365
 And struggling groan beneath the cruel hands
 E'en of the clown he feeds ? and that, perhaps,
 To swell the riot of th' autumnal feast,
 Won by his labor ? Thus the feeling heart
 Would tenderly suggest ; but 'tis enough, 370
 In this late age, adventurous, to have touch'd
 Light on the numbers of the Samian sage.

372. *Samian sage*: The wise man of Samos—Pythagoras. He is said to have invented the term *philosopher* (lover of wisdom), and to have as-

High Heaven forbids the bold presumptuous strain,
Whose wisest will has fix'd us in a state,
That must not yet to pure perfection rise.

375

TROUT-FISHING.

Now, when the first foul torrent of the brooks,
 Swell'd with the vernal rains, is ebb'd away,
 And, whitening, down their mossy-tinctured stream
 Descends the billowy foam ; now is the time,
 While yet the dark-brown water aids the guile,
 To tempt the trout. The well dissembled fly,
 The rod fine-tapering with elastic spring,
 Snatch'd from the hoary steed the floating line,
 And all thy slender watery stores, prepare.

380

But let not on thy hook the tortured worm
 Convulsive twist in agonizing folds ;
 Which, by rapacious hunger swallow'd deep,
 Gives, as you tear it from the bleeding breast,
 Of the weak, helpless, uncomplaining wretch,
 Harsh pain and horror to the tender hand.

385

When with his lively ray the potent Sun
 Has pierced the streams, and roused the finny race,

390

sumed it as descriptive of himself. He was a great traveller in search of knowledge, and finally settled at Crotona in the southern part of Italy, where he gathered around him a large number of young men of noble birth, and instructed them in the tenets of his philosophy. He is here referred to by Thomson, because it was a principle of the Pythagorean system to abstain from the use of animal food ; and this was based upon the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, that is, the migration of the human soul through the bodies of various animals successively. This doctrine still prevails extensively in Asia.

The *numbers* of the Samian sage are probably the "Golden Verses" attributed to him, but written probably by some other hand. They contained a brief summary of his popular doctrines. To music, both as a science and an art, Pythagoras is said to have given special and successful attention.

- Then, issuing cheerful, to thy sport repair.
 Chief should the western breezes curling play,
 And light o'er ether bear the shadowy clouds. 395
- High to their fount, this day, amid the hills,
 And woodlands warbling round, trace up the brooks ;
 The next, pursue their rocky-channel'd maze
 Down to the river, in whose ample wave
 Their little Naiads love to sport at large. 400
- Just in the dubious point, where with the pool
 Is mix'd the trembling stream, or where it boils
 Around the stone, or from the hollow'd bank
 Reverted plays in undulating flow ;
 There throw, nice judging, the delusive fly ; 405
- And, as you lead it round in artful curve,
 With eye attentive mark the springing game.
 Straight as above the surface of the flood
 They wanton rise, or urged by hunger leap,
 Then fix, with gentle twitch, the barbed hook ; 410
- Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank,
 And to the shelving shore slow dragging some,
 With various hand proportion'd to their force.
 If yet too young, and easily deceived,
 A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod, 415
- Him, piteous of his youth and the short space
 He has enjoy'd the vital light of heaven,
 Soft disengage, and back into the stream
 The speckled captive throw. But should you lure
 From his dark haunt, beneath the tangled roots — 420
- Of pendent trees, the monarch of the brook,
 Behooves you then to ply your finest art.
 Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly ;
 And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft

400. *Naiads* : Certain imaginary female deities (of the Grecian and Roman Mythology) that were fancied to preside over fountains, streams, and seas.

The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear. 425
 At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun —
 Passes a cloud, he desperate takes the death,
 With sullen plunge. At once he darts along
 Deep-struck, and runs out all the lengthen'd line ;
 Then seeks the furthest ooze, the sheltering weed, 430
 The cavern'd bank, his old secure abode ;
 And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,
 Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,
 That feels him still, yet to his furious course
 Gives way, you, now retiring, following now 435
 Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage ;
 Till, floating broad upon his breathless side,
 And to his fate abandon'd, to the shore
 You gayly drag your unresisting prize.

NOON-DAY RECREATIONS.

Thus pass the temperate hours ; but when the sun 440
 Shakes from his noonday throne the scattering clouds,
 E'en shooting listless languor through the deeps ;
 Then seek the bank where flowering elders crowd,
 Where, scattered wild, the lily of the vale
 Its balmy essence breathes, where cowslips hang 445
 The dewy head, where purple violets lurk,
 With all the lowly children of the shade ;
 Or lie reclined beneath yon spreading ash,
 Hung o'er the steep ; whence, borne on liquid wing,
 The sounding culver shoots ; or where the hawk, 450
 High in the beetling cliff, his eyry builds.
 There let the classic page thy fancy lead
 Through rural scenes ; such as the Mantuan swain

427. *The death* : That which causes death—the hook.450. *The culver* : The wood-pigeon.453. *Mantuan swain* : Virgil, whose Pastoral songs (the Eclogues) are
here deservedly commended for their harmonious numbers.

Paints in the matchless harmony of song ;
 Or catch thyself the landscape, gliding swift

455

Athwart Imagination's vivid eye ;
 Or, by the vocal woods and waters lulled,
 And lost in lonely musing, in the dream,
 Confused, of careless solitude, where mix
 Ten thousand wandering images of things,
 Soothe every gust of passion into peace ;
 All but the swellings of the soften'd heart,
 That weaken, not disturb, the tranquil mind.

460

Behold yon breathing prospect bids the Muse
 Throw all her beauty forth. But who can paint
 Like Nature ? Can Imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation, hues like hers ?

465

Or can it mix them with that matchless skill,
 And lose them in each other, as appears
 In every bud that blows ? If fancy then
 Unequal fails beneath the pleasing task,
 Ah, what shall language do ? Ah, where find words
 Tinged with so many colors ; and whose power,
 To life approaching, may perfume my lays
 With that fine oil, those aromatic gales,
 That inexhaustive flow continual round ?

470

Yet, though successless, will the toil delight.

Come then, ye virgins and ye youths, whose hearts
 Have felt the raptures of refining love ;
 And thou, Amanda, come, pride of my song !

475

480

465-476. Amid the growing freshness and increasing beauty of the land, the poet walks to select a scene, the loveliest he can find, on which to lay out the choicest colors of the Muse. He feels, as he gazes, how difficult it is to limn in words the varying splendor of the Spring, and exclaims—"But who can paint like Nature?" &c.—C.

480. *Amanda*: This lady was Miss Elizabeth Young, whom Thomson greatly desired to marry ; but he conceived himself not warranted in offering his hand, from the scantiness of his income. She became the wife of Vice Admiral John Campbell. Thomson writes of her, as will be ob-

Form'd by the Graces, loveliness itself :
 Come with those downcast eyes, sedate and sweet,
 Those looks demure, that deeply pierce the soul,
 Where, with the light of thoughtful reason mix'd,
 Shines lively fancy and the feeling heart.
 Oh, come ! and while the rosy-footed May

485

served, with the greatest ardor of affection. She is said to have been the only woman to whom he was known to be attached, and as she was possessed of very superior endowments, his disappointment in obtaining her greatly diminished his enjoyment of life. In a letter to his sister in 1747, dated at Hagley, Worcestershire, he thus writes on this subject :— “ My circumstances have hitherto been so variable and uncertain in this fluctuating world as induce to keep me from engaging in such a state ; and now, though they are more settled, and of late considerably improved, I begin to think myself too far advanced in life for such youthful undertakings, not to mention some other petty reasons that are apt to startle the delicacy of difficult old bachelors. I am, however, not a little suspicious that, were I to pay a visit to Scotland, I might possibly be tempted to think of a thing not easily repaired if done amiss.”

481. *The Graces* : In the Grecian Mythology these are described as three young and beautiful sisters, the companions of Venus, the goddess of Beauty. They were (as Anthon remarks) an aesthetic conception of all that is beautiful and attractive in the physical as well as in the social world. The Graces were at all times, in the creed of Greece, the goddesses presiding over social enjoyment, the banquet, the dance, and all that tended to inspire gayety and cheerfulness.

To these, according to Thomson's poetical conception, his Amanda was indebted for her surpassing loveliness. Milton, in his *Allegro*, has introduced them in a very lively strain.

486. *Rosy-footed May* : A beautiful personification of this favorite spring month. The epithet applied is obviously appropriate to the month as productive of roses. The first day of this month has long been celebrated in England with great festivity and mirth—the observance owing its origin, as is thought, to the heathen entertainments practised in honor of the goddess Flora. The Druids on the eve of May-day were accustomed to illuminate the hill-tops of Britain in demonstration of their gratitude and joy for the return of Spring in its maturity. Subsequently all classes in England have participated in the sports appropriated to May-day, when, in the language of old Chaucer, “ forth goeth all the court, most and least, to fetch the flowres fresh, and braunch and broom.” In this diversion Henry VIII. and Katharine, and the entire court, engaged with high glee.

Steals blushing on, together let us tread
 The morning dews, and gather in their prime
 Fresh-blooming flowers, to grace thy braided hair,
 And thy loved bosom that improves their sweets.

490

THE WINDING AND WATERED VALE.

See, where the winding vale its lavish stores,
Irrigous, spreads. See, how the lily drinks
 The latent rill, scarce oozing through the grass,
 Of growth luxuriant ; or the humid bank,
 In fair profusion, decks. Long let us walk,

495

Where the breeze blows from yon extended field
 Of blossom'd beans. Arabia cannot boast
 A fuller gale of joy, than liberal thence
 Breathes through the sense, and takes the ravish'd soul.

Nor is the mead unworthy of thy foot,
 Full of fresh verdure and unnumbered flowers,
The negligence of Nature, wide and wild ;
Where, undisguised by mimic art, she spreads
Unbounded beauty to the roving eye.

500

Here their delicious task the fervent bees,
 In swarming millions, tend. Around, athwart,
 Through the soft air, the busy nations fly,
 Cling to the bud, and, with inserted tube,
 Suck its pure essence, its ethereal soul ;
 And oft, with bolder wing, they soaring dare

505

The purple heath, or where the wild thyme grows,
 And yellow load them with the luscious spoil.

510

497. *Arabia, &c.*: This country is celebrated for its aromatic productions.

505-512. Thomson was a close observer of Nature : she sat for every picture he draws.—C.

511. *The purple heath* : The landscapes of Scotland and England are beautifully diversified by large tracts covered with this shrub, that bears a very delicate purple flower. The leaves retain their verdure through

THE FLOWER-GARDEN.

At length the finish'd garden to the view
 Its vistas opens, and its alleys green.

Snatch'd through the verdant maze, the hurried eye 515

Distracted wanders: now the bowery walk

Of covert close, where scarce a speck of day

Falls on the lengthen'd gloom, protracted sweeps;

Now meets the bending sky; the river now

Dimpling along, the breezy ruffled lake,

520

The forest darkening round, the glittering spire,

Th' ethereal mountain, and the distant main.

But why so far excursive? when at hand,

Along these blushing borders, bright with dew,

And in yon mingled wilderness of flowers,

525

Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace;

Throws out the snow-drop and the crocus first,

The daisy, primrose, violet darkly blue,

the year. The shrub is made use of for thatch, brooms, beds for the poor, and for heating ovens. Look now at the heather (says Prof. Wilson), and smile whenever henceforth you hear people talk of *purple*.

527. *Crocus*: The first flower of Spring. The Scotch crocus is striped with white and purple; other varieties are striped with orange and dark purple. An ancient fable is connected with this flower: a youth, Crocus, being unable to marry a certain nymph, was said to have pined away, and to have been changed into the crocus, or saffron, this name being applied also to the saffron used in medicine, and which blossoms in September.

528. *The daisy*: A favorite flower in Britain. It owed, perhaps, its name to Chaucer, who lived in the fourteenth century. From the peculiarity which this flower possesses of folding its petals at sunset, and of expanding them at sunrise, he called it *Day's-eye*. One of Montgomery's prettiest poems is devoted to the daisy that sprang up unexpectedly in Dr. Carey's garden, at Serampore, in India, out of some English earth, in which other seeds had been conveyed to him from England. He represents the missionary as addressing it thus:

Thrice welcome, little English flower!
 My mother country's white and red,

And polyanthus of unnumber'd dyes ;
 The yellow wallflower, stain'd with iron brown,
 And lavish stock that scents the garden round ;
 From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed,
 Anemones ; auriculas, enrich'd
 With shining meal o'er all their velvet leaves,
 And full ranuncula of glowing red.

530

535

In rose or lily, till this hour,
 Never to me such beauty spread :

* * * *

Thrice welcome, little English flower !
 Whose tribes, beneath our natal skies
 Shut close their leaves while vapors lower ;
 But, when the sun's gay beams arise,
 With unabash'd but modest eyes,
 Follow his motion to the west,
 Nor cease to gaze till daylight dies,
 Then fold themselves to rest, &c.

The daisy is the symbol of unconscious beauty ; while the crocus is the symbol of cheerfulness and gayety.

528. *The primrose* (prime-rose) is an early rose of spring. In Flora's Dictionary it is the symbol of delight in bringing modest worth from obscurity. In English history white and red roses were emblems, respectively, of the rival families of York and Lancaster, in their protracted contests for the crown.

The blue violet is employed as an emblem of faithful friendship : the white, of modest worth.

529. The *polyanthus* (so called from its *many flowers*) is said to be a symbol of confidence in a friend. It belongs to the Primrose family : the small flowers upon its stalk growing in clusters.

533. The *anemone* is sometimes seen putting forth its pale flowers amid the snows of spring. It loves damp and shady situations. The name, derived from a Greek word signifying *wind*, is properly applied to this flower, because it expands most rapidly in windy weather. Its stem, two or three feet high, bears one flower at the top, possessing large white petals. But there are several species of anemone.

533. The *Auricula* (Flora's symbol of pride and elegance) is a species of primrose, called by this name because its leaves are shaped like the ears of a bear.

535. *Ranunculus* (so called from *rana*, a frog, because the flower abounds in places frequented by frogs), sometimes called crowfoot, sometimes buttercup, is a kind of plants, some of which are beautiful flowering plants, particularly the Turkey or Persian varieties, which are distinguished for the richness of their colors.

Then comes the tulip race, where beauty plays
 Her idle freaks. From family diffused
 To family, as flies the father dust,
 The varied colors run ; and while they break
 On the charm'd eye, th' exulting florist marks,
 With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
 No gradual bloom is wanting, from the bud,
 First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky tribes ;
Nor hyacinths of purest virgin white,
Low-bent, and blushing inward ; nor jonquils
 Of potent fragrance ; nor narcissus fair,
 As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still ;
 Nor broad carnations, nor gay spotted pinks ;
 Nor, shower'd from every bush, the damask rose :
 Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,
 With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
 The breath of Nature, and her endless bloom.

540

545

550

DEVOUT ADDRESS TO THE GREAT SOURCE OF BEING.

Hail, Source of Being ! Universal Soul
 ✓ Of heaven and earth ! Essential Presence, hail !

N.B

547. *Fabled fountain* : The classical story of Narcissus is somewhat variously narrated, but the substance of it is, that having seen his own image reflected from a fountain, and discovering its strong resemblance to the form of a deceased twin-sister, whose features and dress had been the counterpart almost of his own, and whom he had tenderly loved, he was accustomed afterwards to visit the fountain, and gaze upon the image that brought her vividly and affectingly before his mind. His grief preyed upon his mind, and brought him prematurely to death, and the gods, it was said, compassionately changed him into the flower that bears his name. That flower suits the fable so far as this :—it delights in the margins of streams and fountains, and bending the top of its slender stalk over the water, it may easily be conceived as viewing there its own image : besides this, like the classical Narcissus, it is a short-lived flower.

553–568. *Hail ! Source of Being ! &c.* : The sight of those thrifty laborers (described in 505–512), in which the domestic toils of man are imaged, and the provision which Nature makes in a succession of the sweet-

To Thee I bend the knee ; to Thee my thoughts
 Continual climb ; Who, with a master hand,
Hast the great whole into perfection touch'd.
 By Thee the various vegetative tribes,
 Wrapp'd in a filmy net and clad with leaves,
 Draw the live ether and imbibe the dew.
 By Thee disposed into congenial soils,

555

560

est flowers for his gratification (525-552), bring God and his goodness to the poet's mind. His address to the Deity is of exquisite delicacy and truth.—C.

558-4. *Universal Soul, &c.* : Very far was Thomson, in the use of this expression, from adopting the Pantheistic doctrine of the "Animus Mundi," which confounds the Deity with creation, and makes the various creatures but several parts of the great God. He believed in a personal God, the *source* of being, and always devoutly discriminated between Him and his creatures in the homage which he frequently pays Him in this Poem of the Seasons. According to Cicero, the ancient Stoicks held that this world is wise, and has a mind or soul, whereby it formed or fabricated both it and itself, and orders, moves, and governs all things ; and that the sun, moon, and stars are gods, because a certain animal intelligence pervades and permeates all things. The learned Varro asserted, that the soul of the world, and its parts, constituted the true gods. This theology or philosophy, as Leland observes, furnished a pretext for worshipping the several parts of the world, and the powers and virtues diffused through the parts of it, under the name of the popular divinities ; though, in the following lines, Pope may have possibly designed to express no other idea than that of the Divine Omnipresence and universal agency, as set forth in the Scriptures, he could not have presented a more literal, as well as beautiful, statement or illustration of the Pantheistic and pernicious doctrine to which we have adverted.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
 Whose body nature is, and God the *soul* ;
 That changed through all, and yet in all the same,
 Great in the earth as in the ethereal flame ;
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees ;
 Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

Thomson, in the text, conveys simply the idea, that God is the author of heaven and earth, or the universe, and that He carries forward the multifarious operations going on, by his universal and mysterious agency : an idea embraced in that sublime sentence of the apostle Paul—" Of Him, and to Him, and through Him, are all things."

Stands each attractive plant, and sucks and swells
 The juicy tide ; a twining mass of tubes.
 At Thy command the vernal sun awakes
 The torpid sap, detruded to the root
 By wintry winds ; that now, in fluent dance,
 And lively fermentation mounting, spreads
 All this innumerous-color'd scene of things.

565

As rising from the vegetable world

My theme ascends, with equal wing ascend,

570

My panting Muse. And hark, how loud the woods
 Invite you forth in all your gayest trim.

Lend me your song, ye nightingales ! oh, pour
 The mazy-running soul of melody

Into my varied verse ! while I deduce,

575

From the first note the hollow cuckoo sings,

568. Critics have censured Thomson for employing many pedantic and cumbrous expressions, one of which, *innumerous-color'd*, is here used, describing the scene of things around us as possessed of innumerable shades of color.

571. *My panting Muse* : Modern poets have imitated the classical poets of Greece and Rome in ascribing their poetic conceptions and compositions to an imaginary deity called by this name. Of the Muses there were nine, one of whom was honored as presiding over poetry. Other fine arts were patronized by her sister Muses. As our author is now about to undertake more elevated themes, instead of calling upon his Imagination and Fancy to aid him, he bids his panting Muse, under the figure of a bird (see also 699-700) to ascend "with equal wing." This word is generally used, therefore, by English poets as denoting the genius or power of poetry—the mental energy which produces this form of composition.

576. *Cuckoo* : This bird belongs to a group which is characterized by having the toes situated two before and two behind. It is a migratory bird ; it arrives in England in the month of April for the purpose of breeding. It differs from almost every other bird in not constructing a nest, nor under any circumstances hatching its own eggs ; but deposits them in the nests of other birds, as the hedge-sparrow. The unfledged young have a remarkable instinct, which impels them to unceasing efforts to expel their helpless companions from the nest, which they effect by pushing them in the hollow of their back to the verge of the nest, and diting them over, until they at length monopolize all the care and pro-

The symphony of Spring, and touch a theme
Unknown to fame,—the Passion of the Groves.

THE LOVE OF THE GROVES AND COURTSHIP OF BIRDS.

- When first the soul of love is sent abroad,
 Warm through the vital air, and on the heart 580
 Harmonious seizes, the gay troops begin,
 In gallant thought, to plume the painted wing ;
 And try again the long-forgotten strain,
 At first faint warbled. But no sooner grows
 The soft infusion prevalent and wide, 585
 Than, all alive, at once their joy o'erflows
 In music unconfined. Up springs the lark,
 Shrill-voiced and loud, the messenger of morn :
 Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounted sings
 Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts 590
 Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse

vision of the foster-parent. The young cuckoos of the year do not leave England till the month of September.—BRANDE.

579-604. To this fine hymn the birds add their songs, each according to its kind: the untaught harmony of Spring comes from the clear sky, the tree-top, and the blooming hawthorn; nor are the songsters unseen by the poet, who knows the haunts of each. He gives the bramble to the wren, the half-long tree to the thrush, and the cloud to the lark.—C.

587. *The lark*: The scene described by the poet receives further illustration from the pen of Mrs. Ellis, who, among other fine things, says, in her "Poetry of Life,"—And then there is the glad voice of the lark, that spring of perpetual freshness, pouring forth its untiring and inexhaustible melody. Who ever listened to this voice on a clear spring morning, when Nature was first rising from her wintry bed, when the furze was in bloom, and the lambs at play, and the primrose and the violet scented the delicious south wind that came with the glad tidings of renovated life; who ever listened to the song of the lark on such a morning, while the dew was upon the grass, and the sun was smiling through a cloudless sky, without feeling that the spirit of joy was still alive within, around, and above him, and that those wild and happy strains, floating in softened melody upon the scented air, were the outpourings of a gratitude too rapturous for words!

Deep tangled, tree irregular, and bush
 Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
 Of the coy quiristers that lodge within,
 Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush

595

And woodlark, o'er the kind contending throng
 Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
 Of notes ; when listening Philomela deigns
 To let them joy, and purposes, in thought
 Elate, to make her night excel their day.

600

The blackbird whistles from the thorny brake *frank*
 The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove.

Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowering furze
 Pour'd out profusely, silent. Join'd to these
 Innumerable songsters, in the fresh'ning shade
 Of new-sprung leaves, their modulations mix

605

Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
 And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
 Aid the full concert ; while the stock dove breathes

598. *Philomela* : The Nightingale, so called for the reason stated by the poet. It ranks among the sweetest of song-birds, but owes perhaps no small share of its celebrity to the circumstance of the serenity and quiet of the night hours, and to its being the solitary songster. They migrate in April or May to England from the south, for the purpose of breeding ; "and (according to Brande) the famed song of the male is his love-chant, and ceases when his mate has hatched her brood. Vigilance, anxiety, and caution now succeed to harmony ; and his croak is the hush, the warning of danger and suspicion, to the infant charge and the mother bird. If by accident his mate be killed, the male resumes his song ; and will continue to chant till very late in summer, unless he can attract, as he commonly soon does, another female."

The term *Philomela* signifies *song-loving*. Its application to the sweet-singing Nightingale is connected with the classical legend which affirms that Philomela, a daughter of Pandion, king of Athens, getting into difficulty, was, in answer to her prayer, changed by the gods into a nightingale.

607-9. In the spring, says Mrs. Ellis, when the *rooks* first begin to be busy with their nests, their language, like their feelings and occupations, is cheerful, bustling, and tumultuous. Within the rookery it is perfect discord ; but heard in the distance it conveys to the mind innumerable

- A melancholy murmur through the whole. 610
'Tis love creates their melody, and all .
This waste of music is the voice of love ;
That even to birds and beasts the tender arts
Of pleasing teaches. Hence the glossy kind
Try every winning way inventive love 615
Can dictate, and in courtship to their mates
Pour forth their little souls. First, wide around,
With distant awe, in airy rings they rove,
Endeavoring by a thousand tricks to catch
The cunning, conscious, half averted glance 620
Of the regardless charmer. Should she seem
Softening the least approvance to bestow,
Their colors burnish, and, by hope inspired,
They brisk advance ; then, on a sudden struck,
Retire disorder'd ; then again approach ; 625
In fond rotation spread the spotted wing,
And shiver every feather with desire.

NEST-BUILDING.

- Connubial leagues agreed, to the deep woods
They haste away, all as their fancy leads,
Pleasure, or food, or secret safety prompts ; 630
That Nature's great command may be obey'd,
Nor all the sweet sensations they perceive
Indulged in vain. Some to the holly hedge
Nestling repair, and to the thicket some ;

pleasing associations with that delightful season of the year, and the universal alacrity and joy with which the animal creation resume their preparations for a new and happy life.

616-627. *Courtship*, &c.: This entire passage displays to great advantage the habits of close and minute observation, and also of accurate and graphic description, for which Thomson is deservedly celebrated.

631. *Nature's great command*: Gen. i. 22—"And God blessed them, and said, Let fowl multiply in the earth."

- Some to the rude protection of the thorn 635
 Commit their feeble offspring. The cleft tree
 Offers its kind concealment to a few,
 Their food its insects, and its moss their nests.
 Others apart, far in the grassy dale,
 Or rough'ning waste, their humble texture weave. 640
 But most in woodland solitudes delight,
 In unfrequented glooms, or shaggy banks,
 Steep and divided by a babbling brook,
 Whose murmurs soothe them all the livelong day,
 When by kind duty fix'd. Among the roots 645
 Of hazel, pendent o'er the plaintive stream,
 They frame the first foundation of their domes ; +
 Dry sprigs of trees, in artful fabric laid,
 And bound with clay together. Now 'tis naught
 But restless hurry through the busy air, 650
 Beat by unnumber'd wings. The swallow sweeps
 The slimy pool, to build his hanging house
 Intent. And often, from the careless back
 Of herds and flocks, a thousand tugging bills
 Pluck hair and wool ; and oft, when unobserved, 655

652. Hanging house : Reference is here made to those swallows that build their nest against the interior wall of a chimney, or some other perpendicular wall, to which, by one of its sides, it is attached. That of the chimney-swallow is composed of small twigs fastened together with a strong glue or gum, secreted by two glands on each side of the back part of the head, which mixes with the saliva. The window-swallow, or martin, build of mud taken from a neighboring brook, which they put on about half an inch thick in the morning, leaving it till the next morning that it may become dry and hard, so as to receive then a further addition. Thus the nest is completed in ten or twelve days.

The swallow (says Sir Humphrey Davy) is one of my favorite birds, and a rival to the nightingale, for he gladdens my sense of seeing as the other does my sense of hearing. He is the joyous prophet of the year, the harbinger of the best season. He lives a life of enjoyment amongst the loveliest forms of Nature; winter is unknown to him, and he leaves the green meadows of England in autumn for the myrtle and orange groves of Italy and for the palms of Africa.

Steal from the barn a straw ; till soft and warm,
Clean and complete, their habitation grows.

PARENTAL DUTIES OF BIRDS.

- As thus the patient dam assiduous sits,
Not to be tempted from her tender task,
Or by sharp hunger or by smooth delight, 660
Though the whole loosen'd Spring around her blows ;
Her sympathizing lover takes his stand
High on th' opponent bank, and ceaseless sings
The tedious time away ; or else supplies
Her place a moment, while she sudden flits 665
To pick the scanty meal. Th' appointed time
With pious toil fulfill'd, the callow young,
Warm'd and expanded into perfect life,
Their brittle bondage break, and come to light,
A helpless family, demanding food 670
With constant clamor. O, what passions then,
What melting sentiments of kindly care,
On the new parents seize ! Away they fly
Affectionate, and undesiring bear
The most delicious morsel to their young ; 675
Which equally distributed, again
The search begins. E'en so a gentle pair,
By fortune sunk, but form'd of generous mould,
And charm'd with cares beyond the vulgar breast,
In some lone cot amid the distant woods, 680
Sustain'd alone by providential Heaven,
Oft, as they weeping eye their infant train,
Check their own appetites, and give them all.
Nor toil alone they scorn : exalting love,
By the great FATHER OF THE SPRING inspired, 685
Gives instant courage to the fearful race,
And, to the simple, art. With stealthy wing,

Should some rude foot their woody haunts molest,
 Amid a neighboring bush they silent drop,
 And whirring thence, as if alarm'd, deceive 690
 Th' unfeeling schoolboy. Hence, around the head
 Of wand'ring swain, the white-wing'd plover wheels
 Her sounding flight, and then directly on
 In long excursion skims the level lawn,
 To tempt him from her nest. The wild-duck, hence, 695
 O'er the rough moss, and o'er the trackless waste
 The heath-hen flutters (pious fraud !) to lead
 The hot pursuing spaniel far astray.

THE BARBAROUS BIRD-CAGE, AND NEST ROBBERY

Be not the Muse ashamed here to bemoan
 Her brothers of the grove, by tyrant Man 700
 Inhuman caught, and in the narrow cage,
 From liberty confined and boundless air.
 Dull are the pretty slaves, their plumage dull,
 Ragged, and all its brightening lustre lost ;
 Nor is that sprightly wildness in their notes, 705
 Which, clear and vigorous, warbles from the beech.
 O then, ye friends of love and love-taught song,
 Spare the soft tribes, this barbarous art forbear ;
 If on your bosom innocence can win,
 Music engage, or piety persuade. 710

But let not chief the nightingalé lament
 Her ruin'd care, too delicately framed
 To brook the harsh confinement of the cage.
 Oft when, returning with her loaded bill,
 Th' astonish'd mother finds a vacant nest, 715

711. The idea may be thus expressed :—But chiefly, or especially, let not the nightingale be compelled to lament the objects of her care ruined, being too delicately framed, &c. The tenderness of her maternal instinct is here most pathetically portrayed.

By the hard hands of unrelenting clowns
 Robb'd, to the ground the vain provision falls ;
 Her pinions ruffle, and low-drooping scarce
 Can bear the mourner to the poplar shade ;
 Where, all abandon'd to despair, she sings 720
 Her sorrows through the night ; and, on the bough,
 Sole-sitting, still at every dying fall
 Takes up again her lamentable strain
 Of winding woe ; till, wide around, the woods
 Sigh to her song, and with her wail resound. 725

THE YOUNG BIRDS TAUGHT TO FLY.

But now the feather'd youth their former bounds,
 Ardent, disdain ; and, weighing oft their wings,
 Demand the free possession of the sky ;
 This one glad office more, and then dissolves
 Parental love at once, now needless grown : 730
 Unlavish Wisdom never works in vain.
 'Tis on some evening, sunny, grateful, mild,
 When naught but balm is breathing through the woods,
 With yellow lustre bright, that the new tribes
 Visit the spacious heavens, and look abroad 735
 On Nature's common, far as they can see,
 Or wing, their range and pasture. O'er the boughs
 Dancing about, still at the giddy verge
 Their resolution fails ; their pinions still,
 In loose libration stretch'd, to trust the void 740
 Trembling refuse ; till down before them fly
 The parent guides, and chide, exhort, command,
 Or push them off. The surging air receives
 Its plumy burden ; and their self-taught wings
 Winnow the waving element. On ground 745

722. *Dying fall* : That is, in the tones of her voice.727. *Weighing* : Lifting.

Alighted, bolder up again they lead,
 Farther and farther on, the lengthening flight ;
 Till vanish'd every fear, and every power
 Roused into life and action, light in air
 Th' acquitted parents see their soaring race,
 And once rejoicing never know them more.
 High from the summit of a craggy cliff,
 Hung o'er the deep, such as amazing frowns
 On utmost Kilda's shore, whose lonely race
 Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds,
 The royal eagle draws his vigorous young,
 Strong-pounced, and ardent with paternal fire.
 Now fit to raise a kingdom of their own,
 He drives them from his fort, the towering seat,
 For ages, of his empire ; which, in peace,
 Unstain'd he holds ; while many a league to sea
 He wings his course, and preys in distant isles.

750

755

760

**INFLUENCE OF SPRING ON DOMESTIC FOWLS, ON BRUTES, AND
 MONSTERS OF THE DEEP.**

Should I my steps turn to the rural seat,
 Whose lofty elms and venerable oaks
 Invite the rook, which high amid the boughs,
 In early Spring, his airy city builds,
 And ceaseless caws amusive ; there, well pleased,
 I might the various polity survey
 Of the mix'd household kind. The careful hen
 Calls all her chirping family around,
 Fed and defended by the fearless cock ;
 Whose breast with ardor flames, as on he walks,
 Graceful, and crows defiance. In the pond,
 The finely checker'd duck, before her train,

765

770

775

Rows garrulous. The stately sailing swan
 Gives out his snowy plumage to the gale ;
 And, arching proud his neck, with oary feet
 Bears forward fierce, and guards his osier isle,
 Protective of his young. The turkey nigh,
 Loud threatening, reddens ; while the peacock spreads 780
 His every-color'd glory to the sun,
 And swims in radiant majesty along.

O'er the whole homely scene the cooing dove
 Flies thick in am'rous chase, and wanton rolls
 The glancing eye, and turns the changeful neck. 785

While thus the gentle tenants of the shade
 Indulge their purer loves, the rougher world
 Of brutes below rush furious into flame
 And fierce desire. Through all his lusty veins
 The bull, deep scorch'd, the raging passion feels. 790

Of pasture sick, and negligent of food,
 Scarce seen, he wades among the yellow broom,
 While o'er his ample sides the rambling sprays
 Luxuriant shoot ; on through the mazy wood
 Dejected wanders, nor th' enticing bud 795
 Crops, though it presses on his careless sense :

And oft, in jealous madd'ning fancy wrapp'd,
 He seeks the fight, and, idly butting, feigns
 His rival gored in every knotty trunk.
 Him should he meet, the bellowing war begins ; 800
 Their eyes flash fury ; to the hollow'd earth,
 Whence the sand flies, they mutter bloody deeds,

792. *Broom*: A species of evergreen shrub, common in Britain, the branches of which are made up into brooms. Its botanical name is *Spartium scoparium*. There is another species which, being used in dyeing yellow, is called *Dyer's broom*; its botanical name is *Gnista tinctoria*. The beauty of its color may be estimated by what Prof. Wilson says of it:—" You have been wont to call a gold guinea or a sovereign *yellow* ; but if you have got one in your pocket, place it on your palm, and in the light of that broom is it not a *dirty brown* ? "



And, groaning deep, th' impetuous battle mix'd,
 While the fair heifer, balmy-breathing, near,
 Stands kindling up their rage. The trembling steed,
 With this hot impulse seized in every nerve,
 Nor heeds the rein, nor hears the sounding thong.
 Blows are not felt; but, tossing high his head,
 And by the well-known joy to distant plains
 Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away; 810
 O'er rocks and woods and craggy mountains flies;
 And, neighing, on th' aerial summit takes
 Th' exciting gale; then, steep descending, cleaves
 The headlong torrent foaming down the hills,
 E'en where the madness of the straiten'd stream 815
 Turns in black eddies round. Such is the force
 With which his frantic heart and sinews swell.

Nor undelighted by the boundless Spring
 Are the broad monsters of the foaming deep.
 From the deep ooze and gelid cavern roused, 820
 They flounce and tumble in unwieldy joy.
 Dire were the strain, and dissonant, to sing
 The cruel raptures of the savage kind;
 How by this flame their native wrath sublimed,
 They roam, amid the fury of their heart, 825
 The far resounding waste in fiercer bands,
 And growl their horrid loves. But this the theme
 I sing, enraptured, to the British Fair,

Forbids, and leads me to the mountain brow,

Where sits the shepherd on the grassy turf, 830
 Inhaling, healthful, the descending sun.

Around him feeds his many-bleating flock,
 Of various cadence; and his sportive lambs,
 This way and that convolved in briskful glee,

Their frolics play. And now the sprightly race
 Invites them forth; when swift, the signal given,
 They start away, and sweep the massy mound

835

- That runs around the hill ; the rampart once
 Of iron war, in ancient barbarous times,
 When disunited Britain ever bled, 840
 Lost in eternal broil : ere yet she grew
 To this deep-laid, indissoluble state,
 Where wealth and commerce lift their golden heads,
 And o'er our labors liberty and law,
 Impartial, watch ; the wonder of the world ! 845
- What is this *mighty Breath*, ye sages, say,
 That, in a powerful language, felt, not heard,
 Instructs the fowls of heaven, and through their breast
 These arts of love diffuses ? What, but God ?
- Inspiring God ! who, boundless Spirit all, 850
 And unremitting Energy, pervades,
 Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the whole.
 He ceaseless works alone ; and yet alone
 Seems not to work : with such perfection framed
 Is this complex, stupendous scheme of things. 855
- But, though conceal'd, to every purer eye
 Th' informing Author in his works appears :
 Chief lovely Spring, in thee, and thy soft scenes,
 The smiling God is seen ; while water, earth,
 And air attest his bounty, which exalts 860
 The brute creation to this finer thought,
 And annual melts their undesigning hearts
 Profusely thus in tenderness and joy.

838. *The hill*. What hill is here meant it is not easy to determine ; but, as he describes, a little further on, the landscape at and around Hagley Park, the seat of Lord Lyttleton in Worcestershire, it is to be presumed that he refers to the Clent Hills in that vicinity : for these, as Hugh Miller states, at an early period formed one of the battle-fields on which the naked Briton contended on unequal terms with the mail-enveloped Roman.

846. *Breath* : Here used as synonymous with spirit.

857. *Informing* ; Life-giving.

INFLUENCE OF SPRING ON MAN.

Still let my song a nobler note assume,
 And sing th' infusive force of Spring on man. 865
 When heaven and earth, as if contending, vie
 To raise his being and serene his soul,
 Can he forbear to join the general smile
 Of nature? \ Can fierce passions vex his breast,
 While every gale is peace, and every grove 870
 Is melody? \ Hence! from the bounteous walks
 Of flowing Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
 Hard, and unfeeling of another's woe,
 Or only lavish to yourselves, away!
 But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought, 875
 Of all his works, creative Bounty burns
 With warmest beam; and on your open front
And liberal eye, sits, from his dark retreat
 Inviting modest Want. Nor, till invoked,
 Can restless goodness wait: your active search 880
 Leaves no cold wintry corner unexplored;
 Like silent-working Heaven, surprising oft
 The lonely heart with unexpected good.
 For you the roving Spirit of the wind
 Blows Spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds 885
 Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;
 And the sun sheds his kindest rays for you,
 Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
 Reviving Sickness lifts her languid head;

875-6. The thought here intended to be expressed seems to be this: generous men in their wide range of thought, having regard to others as well as to themselves, exhibit more than any other of the works of God—in a more intense degree—the warm benevolence of their Maker. They manifest a similar bounty, originating blessings to the sons of want. Such the poet aptly denominates the *Flower of the human race*.

Life flows afresh ; and young-eyed Health exalts 890
 The whole creation round. Contentment walks
 The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
 Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
 To purchase. Pure serenity apace
 Induces thought and contemplation still. 895
By swift degrees the love of Nature works,
And warms the bosom : till at last, sublimed
To rapture and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God to see a happy world !
 These are the sacred feelings of thy heart,
Thy heart inform'd by reason's purer ray, 900
 O Lyttleton, the friend ! Thy passions thus

890. *Exalts.* While this reading is found in all the copies I have seen, the context seems to require *exults* as a more appropriate word.

900. *Joy of God:* That is, such as He feels—an intense, exalted, rapturous delight.

903. *Lyttleton:* Lord George Lyttleton, the friend and patron of Thomson. He was a member of the British Parliament, and secretary to the Prince of Wales. This latter situation put it in his power to appoint Thomson to the office of surveyor-general of the Leeward Islands, the duties of which he was allowed to perform by a deputy, and the profits realized were £300 per annum. It was through the influence of the same noble friend that the Prince of Wales conferred upon him a pension of £100 a year; but in a few years it was withdrawn, in consequence of his patron becoming obnoxious to the displeasure of the Prince. Being an opponent of the Walpole administration, when that came to a close, he was made, in 1744, one of the Lords of the Treasury; in 1755 a privy-councillor; the next year a chancellor of the exchequer, and some time afterwards was raised to the peerage. As a literary man, some of his poetical effusions possess merit—particularly his monody to his deceased wife, and his prologue to Thomson's tragedy of Coriolanus, which was spoken by Mr. Quin, soon after Thomson's death. He was the author of an elaborate history of the reign of Henry II. of England. His treatise on the conversion of St. Paul still holds a high place among the best works of evidence in favor of Christianity, and to which, Dr. Johnson has said, infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer. He was a liberal patron of several literary men, and died in 1773, at the age of sixty-four. The record of the last scene of his life is worth preserving

And meditations vary, as at large,
 Courting the Muse, through Hagley Park thou strayest, 905
 Thy British Tempè ! There along the dale,
 With woods o'erhung, and shagg'd with mossy rocks,
 Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,
 And down the rough cascade white dashing fall,
 Or gleam in lengthen'd vista through the trees, 910
 You silent steal ; or sit beneath the shade
 Of solemn oaks, that tuft the swelling mounts,
 Thrown graceful round by Nature's careless hand,
 And pensive listen to the various voice
 Of rural peace : the herds, the flocks, the birds, 915
 The hollow-whispering breeze, the plaint of rills,
 That, purling down amid the twisted roots

He is said to have then addressed his physician in the following language: "Doctor, when I first set out in the world, I had friends who endeavored to shake my belief in the Christian religion. I saw difficulties which staggered me; but I kept my mind open to conviction. The evidences and doctrines of Christianity, studied with attention, made me a most firm and persuaded believer of the Christian religion. I have made it the rule of my life, and it is the ground of my future hopes. I have erred and sinned, but have repented, and never indulged any vicious habit. In politics and public life I have made public good the rule of my conduct. I have endeavored, in private life, to do all the good in my power, and never for a moment could indulge malicious or unjust designs upon any person whatsoever."

He was a good man, and is not to be confounded with the second Lord Lyttleton, his son—the sad opposite of his father in moral character and influence ;—a full and interesting account of both of whom has been furnished by Hugh Miller in his recent work, entitled "First Impressions of England and its People."

906. *The British Tempè*: What the celebrated vale of Tempe was to Greece, that, in the poet's estimation, was the dale of Hagley to Britain, and which he now proceeds to describe in an exquisitely beautiful manner. Tempe was a valley in Thessaly, having Mount Olympus on the north and Mount Ossa on the south. It was only five miles long, and in some parts not more than one hundred feet wide. The poets represent it as a most enchanting scene, abounding in verdant walks, cool shades, and the melody of birds. The accuracy of their eulogium is sustained by the reports of some modern travellers.

Which creep around, their dewy murmurs shake
 On the soothed ear. From these abstracted oft,
 You wander through the philosophic world ; 920
 Where in bright train continual wonders rise
 Or to the curious or the pious eye.
 And oft, conducted by historic truth,
 You tread the long extent of backward time ;
 Planning, with warm benevolence of mind 925
 And honest zeal, unwarp'd by party rage,
 Britannia's weal ; how from the venal gulf
 To raise her virtue, and her arts revive.
 Or, turning thence thy view, these graver thoughts
 The Muses charm ; while, with sure taste refined, 930
 You draw th' inspiring breath of ancient song ;
 Till nobly rises, emulous, thy own.
 Perhaps thy loved Lucinda shares thy walk,

933. *Thy loved Lucinda*: Lucy Lady Lyttleton, by whom Lord Lyttleton had one son and two daughters, and with whom he passed about five years in the highest degree of connubial happiness, as we learn from Dr. Johnson, and from the lines of the poet. According to the epitaph inscribed upon her monument, she was

Made to engage all hearts and charm all eyes ;
 Though meek, magnanimous; though witty, wise :
 Polite as she in courts had ever been,
 Yet good as she the world had never seen ;
 The noble fire of an exalted mind,
 With gentle female tenderness combined.
 Her speech was the melodious voice of love,
 Her song the warbling of the vernal grove ;
 Her eloquence was sweeter than her song,
 Soft as her heart, and as her reason strong :
 Her form each beauty of the mind expressed ;
 Her mind was virtue by the Graces dressed.

Having quoted the above, Mr. Hugh Miller remarks, that England in the eighteenth century saw few better men or better women than Lord Lyttleton and his lady ; and it does seem a curious enough fact, that their only son, a boy of many hopes and many advantages, and who possessed quick parts and a vigorous intellect, should have proved, notwithstanding, one of the most flagitious personages of his age. The first Lord Lyttleton was not more conspicuous for his genius and his virtues, than the second Lord Lyttleton for his talents and his vices.

With soul to thine attuned. Then Nature all
 Wears to the lover's eye a look of love ;
 And all the tumult of a guilty world,
 Toss'd by ungenerous passions, sinks away.

935

The tender heart is animated peace !

And, as it pours its copious treasures forth

940

In varied converse, softening every theme,

You, frequent pausing, turn, and from her eyes,

Where meeken'd sense, and amiable grace,

And lively sweetness dwell, enraptured, drink

That nameless spirit of ethereal joy,

Unutterable happiness ! which love

945

Alone bestows, and on a favor'd few.

Meantime you gain the height, from whose fair brow

947-959. In 1845, Hugh Miller, the distinguished Scotch geologist, made a visit at Hagley, and has recently published a full, scientific, and entertaining account of that region. Those who may not be so fortunate as to have access to that account, will appreciate the beauty and appropriateness of the following extracts. They have the greater value in this place because they serve to illustrate the text, and to give us a few incidents in the life of Thomson :

" Passing through part of the garden and a small but well-kept greenhouse, we emerged into the park, and began to ascend the hill by a narrow inartificial path that winds, in alternate sunshine and shadow, as the trees approach or recede through the rich moss of the lawn. Half way up the ascent, where the hill-side is indented by a deep irregular semicircular depression, open and grassy in the bottom and sides, but thickly garnished along the rim with noble trees, there is a semi-octagonal temple, dedicated to the genius of Thomson, 'a sublime poet,' says the inscription, 'and a good man,' who greatly loved, when living, this hollow retreat. I looked with no little interest on the scenery that had satisfied so great a master of landscape, and thought, though it might be but fancy, that I succeeded in detecting the secret of his admiration; and that the specialities of his taste in the case rested, as they not unfrequently do in such cases, on a substratum of personal character. The green hill spread out its mossy arms around, like the arms of a well-padded easy-chair of enormous proportions, imparting, from the complete seclusion and shelter which it affords, luxurious ideas of personal security and ease; while the open part permits the eye to expatiate on an expansive and lovely landscape. We see the ground immediately in front occupied by an un-

The bursting prospect spreads immense around ;
 And, snatch'd o'er hill and dale, and wood and lawn,
 And verdant field, and darkening heath between, 950
 And villages embosom'd soft in trees,
 And spiry towns by surging columns mark'd
 Of household smoke, your eye excursive roams ;
 Wide stretching from the Hall, in whose kind haunt
 The hospitable Genius lingers still, 955
 To where the broken landscape, by degrees
 Ascending, roughens into rigid hills ;
 O'er which the Cambrian mountains, like far clouds,
 That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise.

even sea of tree-tops, chiefly oaks of noble size, that rise at various levels on the lower slopes of the park. The clear sunshine imparted to them this day exquisite variegations of fleecy light and shadow. They formed a billowy ocean of green, that seemed as if wrought in floss silk. Far beyond—for the nearer fields of the level country are hidden by the oaks—lies a blue labyrinth of hedge-rows, stuck over with trees, and so crowded together in the distance that they present, as has already been said, a forest-like appearance ; while, still further beyond, there stretches along the horizon a continuous purple screen, composed of the distant highlands of Cambria. Such is the landscape which Thomson loved."

"As seen from his chosen recess, the blue of the distant hills seems melting into the blue of the sky ; or as he himself better describes the dim outline,

‘The Cambrian mountains, like far clouds
 That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise.’

"I passed somewhat hurriedly through glens and glades—over rising knolls and wooded slopes—saw statues and obelisks, temples and hermit ages, and lingered a while, ere I again descended to the lawn, on the top of an eminence which commands one of the richest prospects I had yet seen. The landscape from this point—by far too fine to have escaped the eye of Thomson—is described in the ‘Seasons’; and the hill which overlooks it, represented as terminating one of the walks of Lyttleton and his lady—that Lucy Lady Lyttleton whose early death formed, but a few years after, the subject of the monody so well known and so much admired in the days of our great-grandmothers :

‘The beauteous bride,
 To whose fair memory flowed the tenderest tear
 That ever trembled o'er the female bier.’”

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THE MISERIES OF WILD AND IRREGULAR PASSION.

Flush'd by the spirit of the genial year, 960
 Now from the virgin's cheek a fresher bloom
 Shoots, less and less, the live carnation round ;
 Her lips blush deeper sweets ; she breathes of youth ;
 The shining moisture swells into her eyes,
 In brighter flow ; her wishing bosom heaves 965
 With palpitations wild ; kind tumults seize
 Her veins, and all her yielding soul is love.
 From the keen gaze her lover turns away,
 Full of the dear ecstatic power, and sick
 With sighing languishment. Ah then, ye fair, 970
 Be greatly cautious of your sliding hearts.
 Dare not th' infectious sigh ; the pleading look,
 Downcast and low, in meek submission dress'd,
 But full of guile. Let not the fervent tongue,
 Prompt to deceive, with adulation smooth, 975
 Gain on your purposed will. Nor in the bower,
 Where woodbines flaunt, and roses shed a couch,
 While Evening draws her crimson curtains round,
 Trust your soft minutes with betraying man.
 And let th' aspiring youth beware of love. 980
 Of the smooth glance beware ; for 'tis too late,
 When on his heart the torrent softness pours.
 Then wisdom prostrate lies, and fading fame
 Dissolves in air away ; while the fond soul,
 Wrapp'd in gay visions of unreal bliss, 985
 Still paints th' illusive form ; the kindling grace ;
 Th' enticing smile ; the modest-seeming eye,
 Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying heaven,
 Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty, and death.

962. *Less and less*: The color of the "live carnation" becomes less intense the farther it proceeds from the centre of the cheek.

971. *Sliding*: Yielding—liable to be drawn from a virtuous state.

And still, false warbling in his cheated ear,
 Her siren voice, enchanting, draws him on
 To guileful shores and meads of fatal joy.

990

E'en present, in the very lap of love
 Inglorious laid ; while music flows around,
 Perfumes, and oils, and wine, and wanton hours ;
 Amid the roses, fierce Repentance rears
 Her snaky crest : a quick returning pang
 Shoots through the conscious heart, where honor still
 And great design, against th' oppressive load
 Of luxury, by fits, impatient heave.

995

1000

But absent, what fantastic woes, aroused,
 Rage in each thought, by restless musing fed,
 Chill the warm cheek, and blast the bloom of life !
 Neglected fortune flies ; and, sliding swift,
 Prone into ruin, fall his scorn'd affairs.

1005

'Tis naught but gloom around : the darken'd sun
 Loses his light ; the rosy-bosom'd Spring
 To weeping fancy pines ; and yon bright arch,
 Contracted, bends into a dusky vault.

All Nature fades extinct ; and she alone,
 Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every thought,
 Fills every sense, and pants in every vein.

1010

Books are but formal dulness, tedious friends ;
 And sad amid the social band he sits,

991. *Siren* : Fascinating and dangerous ; the term being derived from the classical fable of the *Sirens*, two maidens who dwelt upon an island, and when vessels passed took their position in a mead close to the sea-shore, and poured forth from their sweet voices such strains of melody as caused those sailing by to leave their vessels and, forgetting country and home, and every thing else, to remain until they perished with hunger.

993. *E'en present* : Even when he is present with the object of his passionate regard and indulging his loose desires, his pleasures are disturbed by the beginnings of Remorse. Even "amid the roses, fierce Repentance rears her snaky crest." The next paragraph portrays the unhappy condition of the libertine when absent from the object of his guilty passion—"the enchantress of his soul."

- Lonely, and inattentive. From his tongue 1015
 Th' unfinished period falls; while, borne away
 On swelling thought, his wafted spirit flies
 To the vain bosom of his distant fair;
 And leaves the semblance of a lover, fix'd
 In melancholy site, with head declined,
 And love-dejected eyes. Sudden he starts,
 Shook from his tender trance, and restless runs
 To glimmering shades and sympathetic glooms; Rowden
Where the dun umbrage o'er the falling stream,
 Romantic, hangs. There through the pensive dusk 1025
 Strays, in heart-thrilling meditation lost,
 Indulging all to love: or on the bank
 Thrown, amid drooping lilies, swells the breeze
 With sighs unceasing, and the brook with tears.
 Thus in soft anguish, he consumes the day, 1030
 Nor quits his deep retirement, till the moon
 Peeps through the chambers of the fleecy east,
 Enlightened by degrees, and in her train
 Leads on the gentle Hours. Then forth he walks,
 Beneath the trembling languish of her beam, 1035
 With softened soul, and woos the bird of eve
 To mingle woes with his; or, while the world
 And all the sons of Care lie hush'd in sleep,
 Associates with the midnight shadows drear;
 And, sighing to the lonely taper, pours 1040
 His idly-tortured heart into the page,
 Meant for the moving messenger of love;
 Where rapture burns on rapture, every line
 With rising frenzy fired. But if on bed
 Delirious flung, sleep from his pillow flies; 1045
 All night he tosses, nor the balmy power
 In any posture finds; till the gray morn
 Lifts her pale lustre on the paler wretch, ||
 Exanimate by love; and then perhaps

- Exhausted Nature sinks a while to rest, 1050
 Still interrupted by distracted dreams,
 That o'er the sick imagination rise,
 And in black colors paint the mimic scene.
 Oft with th' enchantress of his soul he talks ;
 Sometimes in crowds distress'd ; or, if retired 1055
 To secret winding, flower-enwoven bowers,
 Far from the dull impertinence of man,
 Just as he, credulous, his endless cares
 Begins to lose in blind oblivious love,
 Snatch'd from her yielded hand, he knows not how, 1060
 Through forests huge, and long untravell'd heaths
 With desolation brown, he wanders waste,
 In night and tempest wrapp'd ; or shrinks aghast,
 Back, from the bending precipice ; or wades
 The turbid stream below, and strives to reach 1065
 The further shore ; where succorless and sad,
 She with extended arms his aid implores ;
 But strives in vain. Borne by th' outrageous flood
 To distance down, he rides the ridgy wave,
 Or, whelm'd beneath the boiling eddy, sinks. 1070

THE TORTURES OF JEALOUSY.

- These are the charming agonies of love,
 Whose misery delights. But through the heart,
 Should jealousy its venom once diffuse,
 'Tis then delightful misery no more,
 But agony unmix'd, incessant gall, 1075
 Corroding every thought, and blasting all
 Love's paradise. Ye fairy prospects, then,
 Ye beds of roses, and ye bowers of joy,
 Farewell ! ye gleamings of departed peace,
 Shine out your last ! the yellow-tinging plague 1080
 Internal vision taints, and in a night

- Of livid gloom imagination wraps.
 Ah ! then, instead of love-enliven'd cheeks,
 Of sunny features, and of ardent eyes,
 With flowing rapture bright, dark looks succeed, 1085
 Suffused and glaring with untender fire,
 A clouded aspect, and a burning cheek,
 Where the whole poison'd soul, malignant, sits,
 And frightens love away. Ten thousand fears
 Invented wild, ten thousand frantic views 1090
 Of horrid rivals, hanging on the charms
 For which he melts in fondness, eat him up
 With fervent anguish and consuming rage.
 In vain reproaches lend their idle aid,
 Deceitful pride, and resolution frail, 1095
 Giving false peace a moment. Fancy pours,
 Afresh, her beauties on his busy thought,
 Her first endearments twining round the soul,
 With all the witchcraft of ensnaring love.
 Straight the fierce storm involves his mind anew, 1100
 Flames through the nerves, and boils along the veins ; —
 While anxious doubt distracts the tortured heart ;
 For e'en the sad assurance of his fears
 Were ease to what he feels. Thus the warm youth,
 Whom love deludes into his thorny wilds, 1105
 Through flowery-tempting paths, or leads a life
 Of fever'd rapture or of cruel care ;
 His brightest flames extinguish'd all, and all
 His lively moments running down to waste.

THE JOYS OF VIRTUOUS AND WEDDED LOVE.

But happy they ! the happiest of their kind ! 1110
 Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate

1106. *Or* : Either.

1111. *Geniler stars unite* : The expression will be understood when it

- Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
 'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
 Unnatural oft and foreign to the mind,
 That binds their peace, but harmony itself, 1115
 Attuning all their passions into love ;
 Where friendship full exerts her softest power,
 Perfect esteem enliven'd by desire
 Ineffable, and sympathy of soul ;
 Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will, 1120
 With boundless confidence : for naught but love
 Can answer love, and render bliss secure.
 Let him, ungenerous, who, alone intent
 To bless himself, from sordid parents buys
 The loathing virgin, in eternal care, 1125
 Well merited, consume his nights and days.
 Let barbarous nations, whose inhuman love
 Is wild desire, fierce as the suns they feel ;
 Let eastern tyrants from the light of heaven,
 Seclude their bosom-slaves, meanly possess'd 1130
 Of a mere lifeless, violated form ;
 While those, whom love cements in holy faith,
 And equal transport, free as Nature live,
 Disdaining fear. What is the world to them,
 Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all, 1135
 Who in each other clasp whatever fair
 High Fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish ;
 Something than beauty dearer, should they look

is regarded as borrowed from the now exploded doctrine of Astrology, which affirms that the course of human life is affected and determined by the relative position of the stars, the sun, and planets, at one's birth, or at any other critical period of life. Hence, poetically, the gentler stars —those which exert a benignant influence, are here described as bringing about a happy union.

1120. *Preventing*: Going before, anticipating—the wish of the one party being not only met, but even anticipated, by the corresponding volition of the other party.

Or on the mind, or mind-illumined face ; /
Truth, goodness, honor, harmony, and love,
The richest bounty of indulgent Heaven.

1140

Meantime a smiling offspring rises round,
And mingles both their graces. By degrees.

The human blossom blows ; and every day,

Soft as it rolls along, shows some new charm,
The father's lustre and the mother's bloom.

1145

The father's lustre, and the mother's bloom.
Then infant reason grows apace, and calls

For the kind hand of an assiduous care.
Delightful task! to see the tools the old

Delightful task ! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot.

1150

To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,

To breathe th' enlivening spirit, and to fix
The generous purpose in the glowing breast.

The generous purpose in the glowing breast.
Oh, speak the joy ! ye, whom the sudden tea-

Surprises often, while you look around,

1155

All various Nature pressing on the heart.

An elegant sufficiency, content,

**Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
ease and alternate labor, useful life.**

1160

**Ease and alternate labor, useful life,
Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven;**

These are the matchless joys of virtuous love.

And thus their moments fly. The Seasons then
As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll.

Still find them happy; and consenting SPRING

1185

Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads:
Till evening comes at last, serene and mild.

Till evening comes at last, serene and mild;
When after the long vernal day of life,

1149-1163. These beautiful lines give us Thomson's conception of the elements of a happy life, some of which he was debarred from realizing in his own experience by certain reasons which induced him to remain a bachelor. The educational process is described with great felicity

Enamored more, as more remembrance swells,
With many a proof of recollect'd love,
Together down they sink in social sleep ;
Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign.

1170

S U M M E R.

S U M M E R.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE period of Summer is marked by fewer and less striking changes than Spring in the face of Nature. A soft and pleasing languor, interrupted only by the gradual progression of the vegetable and animal tribes towards their state of maturity, forms the leading character of this season. The active fermentation of the juices, which the first access of genial warmth had excited, now subsides ; and the increasing heats rather inspire faintness and inaction than lively exertions. The insect races alone seem animated with peculiar vigor under the more direct influence of the sun ; and are therefore with equal truth and advantage introduced by the poet to enliven the silent and drooping scenes presented by the other forms of animal nature. As this source, however, together with whatever else our summers afford, is insufficient to furnish novelty and business enough for this act of the drama of the year, the poet judiciously opens a new field, profusely fertile in objects suited to the glowing colors of descriptive poetry. By an easy and natural transition he quits the chastised summer of the temperate clime of Britain for those regions where a perpetual Summer reigns, exalted by such superior degrees of solar heat as give an entirely new face to almost every part of nature. The terrific grandeur prevalent in some of these, the exquisite richness and beauty in others, and the novelty in all, afford such a happy variety for the poet's selection, that we need not wonder if some of his noblest pieces are the product of this delightful excursion.

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He returns, however, with apparent satisfaction, to take a last survey of the softer summer of the island of Britain ; and, after closing the prospect of terrestrial beauties, artfully shifts the scene to celestial splendors, which, though perhaps not more striking in this season than in some of the others, are now alone agreeable objects of contemplation in a northern climate.

AIKIN.

Summer is the manhood of the year. Its powers are developed ; its vigor is fresh ; its plans are matured : it is in the full flush of beauty, and buoyant with the joy and bustle of existence. Turn where we will, there are proofs of operations begun and in progress, which indicate design, wisdom, and activity ; of an infancy and youth spent in preparation, and ending in settled purposes reduced to practice, and useful employments industriously prosecuted. Such is the general character of this season ; and when we take a more accurate survey of particulars, a thousand delightful illustrations occur, all leading us to the same sublime conclusion, that the natural operations which are silently proceeding around us, are the work of a present Deity, and a reflection of his attributes. In the sacred poetry of the Hebrews (particularly in the hundred and fourth Psalm), we meet with many solemn and beautiful views, which show how much alive the inspired writers were to such impressions.

There is a pleasure peculiar to Spring in the contemplation of Nature rising, as it were, from the tomb, and bursting into life, and light, and joy ; but that which belongs to Summer is not less intense, although of a different kind. The delight of this season arises from the view of the full development or successful progress of the powers and processes which in Spring began to operate. The plants which had just pierced the earth in the commencement of that season have now shot forth their stalks, and expanded their blades, and opened their beautiful flowers to the sun ; the trees rejoice in their leafy pride ; the fields luxuriate in the abundance of their vegetable stores ; and

animated Nature is instinct with life and enjoyment. The whole scene is full of delight; but it is only when it is associated with religious feelings, and when it raises the mind to a Father Being, who called all this loveliness into existence, and whose unseen presence and mysterious energies cheer and bless the world He has made, that it can be enjoyed with its highest and most appropriate relish. It is this pious sentiment which gives such sublime beauty to the “Hymn on the Seasons” (at the close of this volume); and perhaps there is no part of that hymn which more successfully expresses the tenderness and devout admiration of a rightly constituted mind, in contemplating the wonders of Nature, than that which refers to Summer.

DUNCAN.

DO VIMO
ABRAOMILAO

Summer.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed.—Invocation.—Address to Mr. Doddington.—An introductory reflection on the motion of the heavenly bodies; whence the succession of the seasons.—As the face of Nature in this season is almost uniform, the progress of the poem is a description of a summer's day.—The dawn.—Sun-rising.—Hymn to the sun.—Forenoon.—Summer insects described.—Hay-making.—Sheep-shearing.—Noon-day.—A woodland retreat.—Group of herds and flocks.—A solemn grove: how it affects a contemplative mind.—A cataract, and rude scene.—View of Summer in the torrid zone.—Storm of thunder and lightning.—A tale.—The storm over, a serene afternoon.—Bathing.—Hour of walking.—Transition to the prospect of a rich, well-cultivated country; which introduces a panegyric on Great Britain.—Sunset.—Evening.—Night.—Summer meteors.—A comet.—The whole concluding with the praise of philosophy.

FROM bright'ning fields of ether fair disclosed,
Child of the Sun, resplendent SUMMER comes,
In pride of youth, and felt through Nature's depth.
He comes attended by the sultry Hours,
And ever-fanning Breezes, on his way;
While, from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her blushing face, and earth and skies,
All smiling, to his hot dominion leaves.

1

5

1-8. Who can fail to admire the beautiful personification of Summer in these lines, so far superior to the personification of Spring at the commencement of the poem? Most appropriately is Summer described as the "child of the Sun," and as coming "from brightening fields of ether" (used by Thomson in the sense of atmosphere): since, as a season, it owes its distinguishing features to the advancing light and heat of the

Hence, let me haste into the midwood shade,
 Where scarce a sunbeam wanders through the gloom ; 10
 And, on the dark-green grass, beside the brink
 Of haunted stream that by the roots of oak
 Rolls o'er the rocky channel, lie at large,
 And sing the glories of the circling year.
 Come, Inspiration ! from thy hermit-seat, 15
 By mortal seldom found : may fancy dare,

sun. It is also characterized as being "in the pride of youth," the different seasons beginning with Spring, bearing a close and striking analogy, in their order, to the four grand periods of human life. His attendants are the sultry Hours and ever-fanning Breezes; while Spring modestly turns away her face from his ardent look, and resigns the earth and skies to his "hot dominion."

6-8. If Winter, according to the poet, mingles at first so much with Spring as to render it doubtful if the reign of the latter be commenced—

"so that scarce
 The bittern knows his time, with bill ingulf'd,
 To shake the sounding marsh; or, from the shore,
 The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,
 And sing their wild-notes to the listening waste"—

so it must be difficult to say when Spring ceases, and Summer comes; but the figurative Thomson reads this at once in the averted and blushing face of the virgin Spring, who modestly retires and makes way for her ardent successor.

This is a remark of Allan Cunningham, but is not strictly applicable to the text, though Thomson, for the sake of consistency and nature, should have made his text conformable to it—by impersonating Spring as a female. Prof. Wilson playfully alludes to the matter in these terms:—"The poet, having made Summer masculine, makes Spring so too, which we cannot help thinking a flaw in this jewel of a picture. Ladies alone should avert their blushful faces from the ardent looks of gentlemen. Spring, in the character of 'ethereal Mildness,' was unquestionably a female, but here she is 'unsexed from the crown to the toe.' For Spring to avert *his* blushful face from the ardent looks of Summer, has on us the effect of making both seasons seem simpletons."

12. *Haunted stream*: Stream frequented by fairies, ghosts, and other imaginary beings that fancy and superstition have begotten.

15. *Inspiration*: An imaginary divinity, to whom, with the license of a poet, he looks for poetic spirit, invention, and skill in the construction of his verse. It is more common, for such a purpose, to address the Muse; and to her, indeed, the author refers in the twenty-first line.

From thy fix'd, serious eye, and raptured glance
 Shot on surrounding heaven, to steal one look
 Creative of the Poet, every power
 Exalting to an ecstasy of soul.

20

And thou, my youthful Muse's early friend,
 In whom the human graces all unite :
 Pure light of mind, and tenderness of heart ;
 Genius, and wisdom ; the gay social sense,
 By decency chastised ; goodness and wit,
 In seldom-meeting harmony combined ;
 Unblemish'd honor, and an active zeal
 For Britain's glory, liberty, and man ;
 O Doddington ! attend my rural song,
 Stoop to my theme, inspirit every line, — *Poet laureate*
 And teach me to deserve thy just applause.

25

30

With what an awful world-revolving power,
 Were first th' unwieldy planets launch'd along
 Th' illimitable void ! thus to remain,
 Amid the flux of many thousand years,
 That oft has swept the toiling race of men
 And all their labor'd monuments away ;
 Firm, unremitting, matchless, in their course ;
 To the kind-temper'd change of night and day,
 And of the seasons ever stealing round,
 Minutely faithful. Such th' All-perfect Hand, *to Wm. Thomson*
 That poised, impels, and rules the steady whole.

35

40

29. *Doddington*: The character and standing of this gentleman are fully drawn in the above lines, and also, perhaps with considerable exaggeration, in the Dedication originally prefixed to this part of the poem. It is to be conceded that Thomson, for the sake of needed patronage, condescended to imitate the then common but undignified practice of sending forth a poem under the auspices of a highly complimentary and flattering dedication. Hazlitt tells us, however, that Thomson on his death-bed expressed a wish that this dedication had been expunged.

41. *Minutely faithful*: Among the wonders of *Astronomy*, and of

When now no more th' alternate Twins are fired,
 And Cancer reddens with the solar blaze,
 Short is the doubtful empire of the night:
 And soon, observant, of approaching day,

45

THE CHARMS OF EARLY MORN.

X The meek-eyed Morn appears, mother of dews,
 At first faint gleaming in the dappled east;

Divine Power and Wisdom, is the fact here noted, that notwithstanding the magnificence of the scale on which the celestial bodies move—the vast spaces in which they perform their revolutions—there is yet such wonderful exactness and order, that their positions at any assigned period can be unerringly calculated. Thomson particularly refers to the wise arrangement for securing the alternation of day and night (by the diurnal motion of the earth), and for securing the change of seasons (by its annual motion). The calculation of the eclipses of the sun and moon, and of Jupiter's satellites, that may be made for years and ages in advance, and the times of which shall be exactly verified by the event, prove the matchless order that prevails amid the apparent irregularities and complexities of the Solar System.

43. *Alternate Twins*: Gemini, that constellation of the Zodiac which the sun appears to enter about the 21st of May. It is distinguished by two bright stars called Castor and Pollux, whence the constellation received its name. The epithet *alternate* is not descriptive of these stars, but merely allusive to the classical fable of the twin-brothers whose names are given to these stars and to the constellation in which they are found. Castor having been slain, Pollux bewailed his loss. Having in prayer spread out his griefs before Jupiter, the choice was proposed to him of being himself elevated to Olympus and sharing with Mars and Minerva the pleasures of the gods constantly, or of dividing them with his deceased brother—Castor and Pollux spending day and day *alternately* in heaven and beneath the earth. Pollux chose the latter arrangement, and thus generously resigned to his brother the enjoyment of heaven every alternate day.

44. *Cancer* (the Crab): That constellation which the Sun appears to enter about the 21st of June, when the nights are shortest, and when it is of *doubtful* propriety to speak of the "empire" of the night at all. In the high latitude of Britain, the evening twilight extends to so late an hour in the night, and the morning twilight commences at so early an hour in the morning, that not more, perhaps, than three hours can be denominated *night*.

- Till far o'er ether spreads the widening glow,
And, from before the lustre of her face, 50
White break the clouds away. With quicken'd step,
Brown Night retires ; young Day pours in apace,
And opens all the lawny prospect wide.
The dripping rock, the mountain's misty top,
Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn. 55
Blue, through the dusk, the smoking currents shine,
And from the bladed field the fearful hare
Limps, awkward ; while along the forest glade,
The wild deer trip, and often turning, gaze
At early passenger. Music awakes 60
The native voice of undissembled joy ;
And thick around the woodland, hymns arise.
Roused by the cock, the soon-clad shepherd leaves
His mossy cottage, where with peace he dwells ;
And from the crowded fold, in order, drives 65
His flock, to taste the verdure of the morn.
Falsely luxurious ! will not man awake,

47. A most beautiful line ! The meek-eyed Morn is called the *mother of dews* because the Dews are most copious in the earliest hours of morn—in the morning twilight.

51-66. Amid the landscape glow of this season, there are many pictures of individual loveliness which stand distinct and alone : that of the morning is as true as it is clear.—C.

52. *Brown Night* : The fitness of this epithet, instead of *black*, will be discovered by reference to note on 44. The personification of Night and Day gives to the description great vivacity and beauty.

67-80. *Falsely luxurious*, &c. : The appeal to the indolent expressed in these lines is an eloquent and just one, but generally, alas ! unheeded by those whose business does not require them to leave the bed at so early an hour. The poet, if report be true, did not sufficiently feel the force of it to act upon it, but was a "falsely luxurious man." "Never before or since" (Hugh Miller remarks) "was there a man of genius wrought out of such mild and sluggish elements as the bard of the 'Seasons.' A listless man was James Thomson ; kindly-hearted ; much loved by all his friends ; little given to think of himself ; 'more fat than ~~bread~~ beseems.' And to Hagley he used to come, as Shenstone ^{Cooley}
~~bread~~

And, springing from the bed of sloth, enjoy
 The cool, the fragrant, and the silent hour,
 To meditation due and sacred song ? 70
 For is there aught in sleep can charm the wise
 To lie in dead oblivion, losing half
 The fleeting moments of too short a life ?
 (Total extinction of th' enlighten'd soul !)
 Or else, to feverish vanity alive, 75
 Wilder'd, and tossing through distemper'd dreams ?
 Who would in such a gloomy state remain
 Longer than Nature craves ; when every Muse
 And every blooming pleasure wait without,
 To bless the wildly devious morning walk ? 80

At sunset THE POWERFUL KING OF DAY.

But yonder comes the powerful King of day,
 Rejoicing in the east. The lessening cloud,
 The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow
 Illumed with fluid gold, his near approach
 Betoken glad. Lo ! now, apparent all,
 Aslant the dew-bright earth, and color'd air,
 He looks in boundless majesty abroad ; 85

tells us, in a hired chaise, drawn by two horses ranged lengthwise, to lie a-bed till long past mid-day, because he had 'no motive' to rise ; and to browse in the gardens on the sunny side of the peaches, with his hands stuck in his pockets." Let not this account of the author detract, however, from the legitimate influence of his admirable appeal in behalf of early-rising ; and let it be remembered that no corporeal habit should be more earnestly and deservedly recommended to be formed in early life. Biography teems with examples of the great achievements wrought in art, science, literature, and religion in consequence of the formation of this habit. Life is too short to waste any of it beyond what Nature craves, "in dead oblivion."

78. *Every Muse* : The idea is, that an early walk will afford to the poet some happy images and thoughts—will give an impulse to compose in lofty verse.

And sheds the shining day, that burnish'd plays
 On rocks and hills and towers, and wandering streams
 High gleaming from afar. Prime cheerer, Light ! 90

Milton

Of all material beings first and best !
 Efflux divine ! Nature's resplendent robe !
 Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapp'd
 In unessential gloom ! and thou, O Sun !
 Soul of surrounding worlds ! in whom best seen 95
 Shines out thy Maker ! may I sing of thee ?
 'Tis by thy secret, strong, attractive force,
 As with a chain indissoluble bound,
 Thy system rolls entire ; from the far bourne
 Of utmost Saturn, wheeling wide his round 100

92. *Efflux divine* : Or, as Milton more fully denominates it, "bright effluence of bright essence increase." The entire description of the blind bard may with great advantage to the reader be here subjoined :

Hail, holy Light ! offspring of heaven first-born,
 Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam
 May I express thee, unblamed ? Since God is light,
 And never but in unapproached light
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
 Bright effluence of bright essence increase.
 Or hearest thou rather pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell ? Before the sun,
 Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.

Par. Lost, Bk. III.

100. *Utmost Saturn* : When this poem was written (1727), no planet more remote than Saturn had been discovered. Herschel and Neptune have since been brought to view, *wheeling* their vastly more magnificent *rounds*. While the revolution of Saturn requires 10,759 days, that of Herschel embraces 30,759, and Neptune occupies 60,128. Each of these two latter planets has a diameter of 35,000 English miles ; that of Saturn being 79,000. The mean distances from the sun at which these planets describe their enormous orbits may be profitably adduced, to give us more just conceptions "of the strong, attractive force" of the sun. Saturn revolves at the distance of 900,000,000 miles ; Herschel, 1,800,000,000 ; Neptune, 2,850,000,000. How appropriately does the poet denominate the Sun the *powerful* King of day, drawing those stupendous bodies, and

Of thirty years, to Mercury, whose disk
 Can scarce be caught by philosophic eye,
 Lost in the near effulgence of thy blaze.
 Informer of the planetary train !

Without whose quick'ning glance their cumbrous orbs 105
 Were brute, unlovely mass, inert and dead,
 And not, as now, the green abodes of life !
 How many forms of being wait on thee,
 Inhaling spirit, from th' unfetter'd mind,
 By thee sublimed, down to the daily race,
 The mixing myriads of thy setting beam ! 110

The vegetable world is also thine,
 Parent of Seasons ! which the pomp precede,
 That waits thy throne, as through thy vast domain,
 Annual, along the bright ecliptic road,

In world-rejoicing state, it moves sublime. 115
 Meantime th' expecting nations, circled gay
 With all the various tribes of foodful earth,
 Implore thy bounty, or send grateful up
 A common hymn ; while, round the beaming car, 120
 High seen, the Seasons lead, in sprightly dance,

preventing them, by his attractive force, from abandoning, in their rapid course, the comprehensive curves assigned them !

104. *Informer*, &c. : The meaning of this term as used here, and by poets generally, is that of *animating principle*, proximate source of life—or the instrument by which vitality is communicated to the planetary worlds, or by which they are made “the green abodes of life.” The same idea has been given above in the expression, “Soul of surrounding worlds,” and is illustrated at length in this and several succeeding paragraphs.

118-129. *Parent of Seasons* : The apparent march of the sun in the ecliptic gives us our seasons. It is here represented as a triumphal procession. The Sun is making an annual tour in his beaming car, as a royal benefactor, with great pomp and majesty. Above and around, the Seasons are leading, in sprightly dance and harmonious union, the rosy-fingered Hours, the Zephyrs, the Rains, the Dews, and the milder Storms. The passage owes its great beauty to the skilful use of the figure of Personification, applied to the Sun, the Seasons, the Hours, &c.

Harmonious knit, the rosy-finger'd Hours,
 The Zephyrs floating loose, the timely Rains,
 Of bloom ethereal the light-footed Dews,
 And soften'd into joy the surly Storms.

125

These, in successive turn, with lavish hand,
 Shower every beauty, every fragrance shower,
 Herbs, flowers, and fruits ; till, kindling at thy touch,
 From land to land is flush'd the vernal year.

Nor to the surface of enliven'd earth,

130

Graceful with hills and dales, and leafy woods,
 Her liberal tresses, is thy force confined ;
 But, to the bowell'd cavern darting deep,
 The mineral kinds confess thy mighty power.

~~A~~Effulgent, hence the veiny marble shines ;

135

Hence Labor draws his tools ; hence burnish'd War
 Gleams on the day ; the nobler works of Peace
 Hence bless mankind, and generous Commerce binds
 The round of nations in à golden chain.

Th' unfruitful rock itself, impregn'd by thee,

140

129. *Is flushed the vernal year*: Is made to burst forth the year in Spring : the year is arrayed in the gay abundance of her Spring season.

133. The poet rather exaggerates the power of the Sun, by ascribing to it the metallic and mineral riches beneath the surface of the earth. His theory also of the formation of the diamond (140-1) is a mere poetical fancy. Its surpassing brilliancy justifies, however, the author in defining it "collected light." Its superior hardness proves also its compactness. Next to the diamond in hardness and value is the *Ruby* (147); its color being a bright red, sometimes tending to a violet. The *Sapphire* (149), another valuable stone, from its bluish, azure hue, is not unaptly denominated *solid ether*. Those that follow are sufficiently described by our author: yet in regard to the *Opal* (156), a word of explanation may be needed. The statement is, that all the several rays of the sun *combined* play through the opal: that is, the opal in a certain position transmits *white* light, whereas the other precious stones (except the diamond) transmit only a portion of the sunbeam—some the green, &c. The opal in another *site*, or position, reflects to the eye a variety of delicate hues.

In dark retirement forms the lucid stone.
 The lively Diamond drinks thy purest rays,
 Collected light, compact ; that, polish'd bright,
 And all its native lustre let abroad,
 Dares, as it sparkles on the fair one's breast,
 With vain ambition emulate her eyes. 145

*green
cottage*

At thee the Ruby lights its deepening glow,
 And with a waving radiance inward flames.
 From thee the Sapphire, solid ether, takes
 Its hue cerulean ; and, of evening tinct,
 The purple-streaming Amethyst is thine. 150

With thy own smile the yellow Topaz burns.
 Nor deeper verdure dyes the robe of Spring,
 When first she gives it to the southern gale,
 Than the green Emerald shows. But, all combined,
 Thick through the whitening Opal play thy beams ;
 Or, flying several from its surface, form
 A trembling variance of revolving hues,
 As the site varies in the gazer's hand. 155

The very dead creation, from thy touch,
 Assumes a mimic life. By thee refined,
 In brighter mazes the reluctant stream
 Plays o'er the mead. The precipice abrupt,
 Projecting horror on the blacken'd flood,
 Softens at thy return. The desert joys,
 Wildly, through all his melancholy bounds.
 Rude ruins glitter ; and the briny deep,
 Seen from some pointed promontory's top,
 Far to the blue horizon's utmost verge,
 Restless, reflects a floating gleam. But this,
 And all the much transported Muse can sing,
 Are to thy beauty, dignity, and use, 160

150. The *Amethyst* is of evening *tinct*, or of the color that early evening assumes.

Unequal far ; great delegated source
Of light, and life, and grace, and joy below !

THE ETERNAL CAUSE, SUPPORT, AND END OF CREATION.

How shall I then attempt to sing of HIM,

175

Who, LIGHT HIMSELF, in uncreated light

Invested deep, dwells awfully retired

Martin

From mortal eye, or angel's purer ken !

Whose single smile has, from the first of time,

180

Fill'd overflowing, all those lamps of heaven,

That beam forever through the boundless sky :

But, should He hide his face, th' astonish'd sun

And all th' extinguish'd stars would loosening reel

Wide from their spheres, and Chaos come again. *Sch*

And yet was ev'ry faltering tongue of man,

185

ALMIGHTY FATHER ! silent in thy praise ;

Thy Works themselves would raise a general voice,

E'en in the depth of solitary woods

By human foot untrod ; proclaim thy power,

190

And to the choir celestial THEE resound,

Th' eternal cause, support, and end of all !

To me be Nature's volume broad display'd ;

And to peruse its all-instructing page,

Or, haply catching inspiration thence,

Some easy passage raptured to translate,

195

My sole delight ; as through the falling glooms

Pensive I stray, or with the rising dawn

On Fancy's eagle wing excursive soar.

178-180. I cannot forbear to call the attention of the reader to the original and exquisite manner in which the illumination of the heavenly bodies is here accounted for. The conception is one that none but a man of poetic genius could have formed, and so happily expressed.

THE SUMMER FORENOON.

Now, flaming up the heavens, the potent sun
 Melts into limpid air the high-raised clouds,
 And morning fogs, that hover'd round the hills
 In party-color'd bands ; till wide unveil'd,
 The face of Nature shines, from where earth seems,
 Far stretch'd around, to meet the bending sphere.

200

Half in a blush of clustering roses lost,
 Dew-dropping Coolness to the shade retires ;
 There, on the verdant turf, or flowery bed,
 By gelid founts and careless rills to muse ;
 While tyrant Heat, disspreading through the sky,
 With rapid sway, his burning influence darts
 On man and beast, and herb and tepid stream.
 Who can unpitying see the flowery race,
 Shed by the morn, their new-flush'd bloom resign,
 Before the parching beam ? So fade the fair,
 When fevers revel through their azure veins.

205

210

215

But one, the lofty follower of the sun,
 Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves,
 Drooping all night ; and, when he warm returns,
 Points her enamor'd bosom to his ray.

Home, from his morning task, the swain retreats,
 His flock before him stepping to the fold ;
 While the full-udder'd mother lows around
 The cheerful cottage, then expecting food,
 The food of innocence and health ! The daw,

220

The rook and magpie, to the gray-grown oaks
 That the calm village in their verdant arms,
 Sheltering, embrace, direct their lazy flight ;
 Where on the mingling boughs they sit embower'd,
 All the hot noon, till cooler hours arise.

225

- Faint, underneath, the household fowls convene ; 230
- And, in a corner of the buzzing shade,
The house-dog with the vacant grayhound lies,
Outstretch'd and sleepy. In his slumbers one
Attacks the nightly thief, and one exults
O'er hill and dale ; till, waken'd by the wasp, 235
They starting snap. Nor shall the Muse disdain
To let the little noisy summer race
Live in her lay, and flutter through her song ;
Not mean though simple. To the sun allied,
From him they draw their animating fire. 240

SUMMER INSECTS.

- Waked by his warmer ray, the reptile young
Come wing'd abroad ; by the light air upborne,
Lighter, and full of soul. From every chink,
And secret corner, where they slept away
The wintry storms ; or, rising from their tombs, 245
To higher life ; by myriads, forth at once,
Swarming they pour ; of all the varied hues
Their beauty-beaming parent can disclose,
Ten thousand forms, ten thousand different tribes
People the blaze. To sunny waters some 250
By fatal instinct fly ; where on the pool
They sportive wheel : or, sailing down the stream,
Are snatch'd immediate by the quick-eyed trout,
Or darting salmon. Through the greenwood glade,
Some love to stray ; there lodged, amused, and fed, 255
In the fresh leaf. Luxurious, others make
The meads their choice, and visit every flower
And every latent herb ; for the sweet task
To propagate their kinds, and where to wrap,
In what soft beds, their young yet undisclosed, 260
Employs their tender care. Some to the house,

- The fold and dairy, hungry, bend their flight ;
 Sip round the pail, or taste the curdling cheese,
 Oft, inadvertent, from the milky stream
 They meet their fate ; or, weltering in the bowl, 265
 With powerless wings around them wrapp'd, expire.
adversus
- But chief to heedless flies, the window proves
 A constant death ; where gloomily retired,
 The villain spider lives, cunning and fierce,
 (Mixture abhor'd !) Amid a mangled heap 270
 Of carcasses, in eager watch he sits,
 O'erlooking all his waving snares around.
 Near the dire cell the dreadless wanderer oft
 Passes, as oft the ruffian shows his front.
 The prey at last ensnared, he dreadful darts, 275
 With rapid glide, along the leaning line ;
 And, fixing in the wretch his cruel fangs,
 Strikes backward, grimly pleased. The fluttering wing
 And shriller sound declare extreme distress,
 And ask the helping, hospitable hand. 280
- Resounds the living surface of the ground ;
 Nor undelightful is the ceaseless hum
 To him who muses through the woods at noon ;
 Or drowsy shepherd, as he lies reclined,
 With half-shut eyes, beneath the floating shade 285
 Of willows gray, close crowding o'er the brook.
- Gradual from these what numerous kinds descend,
 Evading e'en the microscopic eye ! *Pope*
 Full Nature swarms with life ; one wondrous mass
 Of animals, or atoms organized, 290
 Waiting the vital breath, when parent Heaven
 Shall bid his spirit blow. The hoary fen,
 In putrid streams, emits the living cloud
 Of pestilence. Through subterranean cells,
 Where searching sunbeams scarce can find a way, 295
 Earth animated heaves. The flowery leaf

1 Wants not its soft inhabitants, Secure,
 Within its winding citadel, the stone
 Holds multitudes. But chief the forest boughs,
 That dance unnumber'd to the playful breeze,

300

The downy orchard, and the melting pulp
 Of mellow fruit, the nameless nations feed
 Of evanescent insects. Where the pool
 Stands mantled o'er with green, invisible,

305

Amid the floating verdure millions stray.
 Each liquid too, whether it pierces, soothes,
 Inflames, refreshes, or exalts the taste,
 With various forms abounds. Nor is the stream

clamorous

Of purest crystal, nor the lucid air,

310

Though one transparent vacancy it seems,

Void of their unseen people. These, conceal'd

By the kind art of forming Heaven, escape

The grosser eye of man; for, if the worlds

In worlds inclosed should on his senses burst,

From cates ambrosial, and the nectar'd bowl,

315

He would abhorrent turn; and in dead night,

When silence sleeps o'er all, be stunn'd with noise.

NOTHING FORMED IN VAIN OR WITHOUT A WISE PURPOSE.

Let no presuming, impious railer tax

CREATIVE WISDOM, as if aught was formed

In vain, or not for admirable ends.

320

Shall little haughty ignorance pronounce

His works unwise, of which the smallest part

Exceeds the narrow vision of her mind?

As if upon a full-proportion'd dome,

315. *Cates*: Rich food. *Ambrosial*: Delightful to the taste and smell; from *ambrosia*, the food of the gods, according to classical fable. *Nectar'd bowl*: Bowl supplied with delicious drink, fit for the gods - as *nectar* was the name of the liquor supposed to be drank by them.

On swelling columns heaved, the pride of art 325
A critic fly, whose feeble ray scarce spreads
An inch around, with blind presumption bold,
Should dare to tax the structure of the whole!
And lives the man, whose universal eye
Has swept at once th' unbounded scheme of things; 330
Mark'd their dependence so, and firm accord,
As with unfaltering accent to conclude
That this availeth naught? Has any seen
The mighty chain of beings, lessening down
From Infinite Perfection to the brink 335
Of dreary nothing, desolate abyss!
From which astonish'd thought, recoiling, turns?
Till then, alone let zealous praise ascend,
And hymns of holy wonder to that Power,
Whose wisdom shines as lovely on our minds, 340
As on our smiling eyes his servant sun.
Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,
Upward and downward, thwarting and convolved,
The quivering nations sport; till, tempest-wing'd,
Fierce Winter sweeps them from the face of day. 345
E'en so luxurious men, unheeding, pass
An idle summer life in fortune's shine,
A season's glitter. Thus they flutter on
From toy to toy, from vanity to vice;
Till, blown away by death, oblivion comes 350
Behind, and strikes them from the book of life.

HAY-MAKING.

Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead :
The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil.

883: *This*: This particular thing or that—any thing which God has made.

Healthful and strong; full as the summer rose
 Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
 Half naked, swelling on the sight, and all
 Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.

355

E'en stooping age is here; and infant hands
 Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load
 O'ercharged, amid the kind oppression roll.

360

Wide flies the tedded grain. All in a row
 Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
 They spread the breathing harvest to the sun,

365

That throws refreshful round a rural smell: ~~smell~~

Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,
 And drive the dusky wave along the mead,

The russet haycock rises thick behind,

In order gay. While heard from dale to dale,
 Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice

Of happy labor, love, and social glee.

370

SHEEP-SHEARING.

Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,
 They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
 Compelled, to where the mazy-running brook
 Forms a deep pool: this bank abrupt and high,

861. *Tedded*: Spread out for the purpose of being dried by the sun.
 The hay-field is well described in the following paragraph:

"I believe few people," says Dr. Duncan, "have beheld the occupation of the hay-field, which this beautiful season everywhere presents, without feeling a very pure and elevated delight. The mowers moving gracefully in concert, the grass falling sheer beneath the scythe, its graceful fragrance, the maidens raking or tedding the hay, the loading of the carts to remove it to the barn-yard, all excite a sensible pleasure in almost every mind. This enjoyment, both in the bystander and those who are engaged in this rural occupation, seems almost entirely the result of association; it arises chiefly from suggestions and feelings of a moral and benevolent kind."

875

And that fair-spreading in a pebbled shore.
 Urged to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
 The clamor much, of men and boys and dogs,
 Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
 Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,
 On some impatient seizing, hurls them in.

380

Embolden'd then, nor hesitating more,
 Fast, fast they plunge amid the flashing wave,
 And, panting, labor to the farther shore.
 Repeated this, till deep the well-wash'd fleece
 Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt
 The trout is banish'd by the sordid stream.

385

Heavy and dripping, to the breezy brow
 Slow move the harmless race; where, as they spread
 Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
 Only disturb'd and wondering what this wild
 Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
 The country fill; and, toss'd from rock to rock,
 Incessant bleatings run around the hills.

390

At last, of snowy white, the gather'd flocks
 Are in the wattled pen innumEROUS press'd
 Head above head: and ranged in lusty rows,
 The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears. S -
 The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
 With all her gay-dress'd maids attending round.

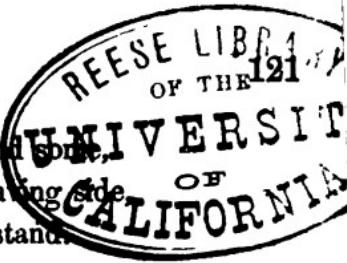
395

One, chief, in gracious dignity enthroned,
 Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and rays
 Her smiles, sweet beaming on her shepherd king;
 While the glad circle round them yield their souls
 To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.
 Meantime, their joyous task goes on apace:

400

405

405-22. That the author had a fine taste and accurate eye for painting, may be gathered from groupings and descriptions without end; for his "Seasons" are a great gallery of all manner of pictures—scriptural, historical, and domestic. He is a rural and landscape painter of the noblest



Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heavy side,
To stamp the master's cipher ready stand.
Others th' unwilling wether drag along ;
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy 410
Holds by the twisted horns th' indignant ram.
Behold where bound, and of its robe bereft,
By needy man, that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient, the mild creature lies !
What softness in its melancholy face, 415
What dumb complaining innocence appears !
Fear not, ye gentle tribes ; 'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you waved ;
No, 'tis the tender swain's well-guided shears,
Who having now, to pay his annual care, 420
Borrow'd your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again.

A simple scene ! yet hence, Britannia sees
Her solid grandeur rise : hence, she commands Y
Th' exalted stores of every brighter clime,
The treasures of the sun without his rage : 425
Hence, fervent all, with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land : her dreadful thunder, hence,
Rides o'er the waves sublime, and now, e'en now,

kind. His sheep-shearing was seen through no other eyes save his own. The sweet humanity with which this scene closes is in the same sympathizing mood with those lines which paint, first, the mariner shipwrecked and alone on the burning coast of savage Africa (939-50), and the caravan of Mecca caught by the simoom in the sandy desert (961-79). the close of the latter is one of the most touching passages in poetry.—C.

428. *Cipher*: Mark of property—generally the initials of the master's name.

423. *Britannia*: The Latin name for Britain. The Romans invaded it in the time of Julius Cæsar, and retained possession of a part of it until the fifth century.

428. *Thunder*: That of the cannon of her navy : by a figure of speech here put for the navy.

Impending hangs o'er Gallia's humbled coast;
Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world.

430

NOON-DAY.

"Tis raging noon; and, vertical, the sun
Darts on the head direct his forceful rays.
O'er heaven and earth, far as the ranging eye
Can sweep, a dazzling deluge reigns, and all,
From pole to pole, is undistinguish'd blaze.

435

In vain the sight, dejected, to the ground
Stoops for relief; thence hot ascending steams
And keen reflection pain. Deep to the root
Of vegetation parch'd, the cleaving fields
And slippery lawn, an arid hue disclose,

440

Blast fancy's bloom, and wither e'en the soul.
Echo no more returns the cheerful sound

Of sharpening scythe: the mower sinking, heaps
O'er him the humid hay, with flowers perfumed; ~~and~~
And scarce a chirping grasshopper is heard
Through the dumb mead. Distressful Nature pants:
The very streams look languid from afar;
Or, through the unshelter'd glade, impatient, seem
To hurl into the covert of the grove.

445

450

All-conquering Heat, oh, intermit thy wrath!
And on my throbbing temples potent thus
Beam not so fierce! Incessant still you flow,
And still another fervent flood succeeds,
Pour'd on the head profuse. In vain I sigh,
And restless turn, and look around for night:
Night is far off; and hotter hours approach.
Thrice happy he! who on the sunless side

455

430. *Gallia*: The Latin name for France, which Julius Cæsar also invaded, and subjected to the Roman sway.

439. *Reflection*: That is, of the sun's rays.

- ✓ Of a romantic mountain, forest-crown'd,
Beneath the whole collected shade reclines : 460
 Or in the gelid caverns, woodbine-wrought,
 And fresh bedew'd with ever-spouting streams,
 Sits coolly calm ; while all the world without,
 Unsatisfied, and sick, tosses in noon :
 Emblem instructive of the virtuous man,
 Who keeps his temper'd mind serene and pure,
 And every passion aptly harmonized,
 Amid a jarring world with vice inflamed.

A WOODLAND SCENE.

- Welcome, ye shades ! ye bowery thickets, hail !
 Ye lofty pines ! ye venerable oaks ! } 470
 Ye ashes wild, resounding o'er the steep !
 Delicious is your shelter to the soul,
 As to the hunted hart the sallying spring,
 Or stream full flowing, that his swelling sides
 Laves, as he floats along the herbaged brink. 475
 Cool, through the nerves, your pleasing comfort glides :
 The heart beats glad ; the fresh-expanded eye
 And ear resume their watch ; the sinews knit ;
 And life shoots swift through all the lighten'd limbs.

- Around th' adjoining brook, that purls along 480
 The vocal grove, now fretting o'er a rock,
 Now scarcely moving through a reedy pool,
 Now starting to a sudden stream, and now
 Gently diffused into a limpid plain ;
 A various group the herds and flocks compose, 485
 Rural confusion ! On the grassy bank
 Some ruminating lie ; while others stand
 Half in the flood, and often bending sip
 The circling surface. In the middle droops
 The strong, laborious ox, of honest front,

Which incomposed he shakes ; and from his sides
 The troublous insects lashes with his tail,
 Returning still. Amid his subjects safe,
 Slumbers the monarch swain ; his careless arm
 Thrown round his head, on downy moss sustain'd ; 495
 Here laid his scrip, with wholesome viands fill'd ;
 There, listening every noise, his watchful dog.
 Light fly his slumbers, if perchance a flight
 Of angry gadflies fasten on the herd ;
 That startling scatter from the shallow brook, 500
 In search of lavish stream. Tossing the foam,
 They scorn the keeper's voice, and scour the plain,
 Through all the bright severity of noon ;
 While, from their laboring breasts, a hollow moan,
 Proceeding, runs low bellowing round the hills. 505

Oft in this season too, the horse provoked,
 While his big sinews full of spirits swell,
 Trembling with vigor, in the heat of blood,
 Springs the high fence ; and, o'er the field effused,
 Darts on the gloomy flood, with steadfast eye, 510
 And heart estranged to fear. His nervous chest,
 Luxuriant and erect, the seat of strength,
 Bears down th' opposing stream. Quenchless his thirst,
 He takes the river at redoubled draughts ;
 And with wide nostril, snorting, skims the wave. 515

Still let me pierce into the midnight depth
 Of yonder grove, of wildest, largest growth,
 That, forming high in air a woodland choir,
 Nods o'er the mount beneath. At every step,
 Solemn and slow, the shadows blacker fall, 520
 And all is awful, listening gloom around !

*These are the haunts of Meditation ; these
 The scenes where ancient bards th' inspiring breath,*

Ecstatic, felt ; and, from this world retired,
 Conversed with angels and immortal forms, 525
 On gracious errands bent : to save the fall
 Of virtue struggling on the brink of vice ;
 In waking whispers, and repeated dreams,
 To hint pure thought, and warn the favor'd soul
 For future trials fated to prepare ;
 To prompt the poet, who devoted gives
 His muse to better themes ; to soothe the pangs
 Of dying worth, and from the patriot's breast
 (Backward to mingle in detested war,
 But foremost when engaged) to turn the death ;
 And numberless such offices of love,
 Daily and nightly, zealous to perform.

Shook sudden from the bosom of the sky,
 A thousand shapes or glide athwart the dusk
 Or stalk majestic on. Deep roused, I feel 540
A sacred terror, a severe delight
 Creep through my mortal frame ; and thus, methinks,
 A voice, than human more, th' abstracted ear
 Of fancy strikes :—“ Be not of us afraid,
 Poor kindred man ! Thy fellow-creatures, we
 From the same Parent Power our being drew ;
 The same our Lord and laws and great pursuit.
 Once, some of us, like thee, through stormy life,

523. *Ancient bards* : Inspired Hebrew bards. To no others is the language that follows appropriate. Thomson assigns to angelic beings, visiting our earth, a variety of offices that have fancy rather than Scripture or argument for their support. As a fancy sketch, the picture is beautiful : as a sketch of real life, there is a lack of evidence in support of its correctness.

539. *Shapes* : That is, of departed spirits, whom the poet fancies to be present at this hour of noon, and to address him. He does not claim that he heard their voice with the ear of the body, but with the *abstracted ear of fancy*. The introduction of this passage gives novelty and variety to the narrative, turning our thoughts to the probable occupations of deceased friends, and leading us into, at least, a pleasant speculation.

Toil'd, tempest-beaten, ere we could attain
 This holy calm, this harmony of mind,
 Where purity and peace immingle charms.
 Then fear not us ; but with responsive song,
 Amid these dim recesses, undisturb'd
 By noisy folly and discordant vice,

Of Nature sing with us, and Nature's God. 555

Here frequent, at the visionary hour,
 When musing midnight reigns or silent noon,
 Angelic harps are in full concert heard,
 And voices chanting from the wood-crown'd hill,
 The deepening dale, or inmost silvan glade :

A privilege bestow'd by us, alone,
 On Contemplation, or the hallow'd ear
 Of poet, swelling to seraphic strain."

And art thou, Stanley, of that sacred band ?
 Alas, for us too soon ! Though raised above
 The reach of human pain, above the flight

564. *Stanley* : Miss Elizabeth Stanley—a young lady, well known to the author, who died at the age of eighteen in the year 1738. For her Thomson wrote a long and beautiful epitaph, which is included among his published poems. She was buried in Holyrood church, Southampton. The epitaph speaks of her as the pride and delight of her parents; the joy, the consolation, and pattern of her friends; a mistress not only of the English and French, but in a high degree of the Greek and Roman learning, yet without vanity or pedantry.

It may here be asked how Thomson, having published this poem in 1727, could commemorate the death of a young lady which occurred more than ten years afterwards. The explanation is easy. In successive editions the author, nearly up to the period of his death in 1748, was accustomed to make alterations, to add and to withdraw, as suited his improving taste or the progress of events. "These Poems" (the Seasons) "with which," says Dr. Samuel Johnson, "I was acquainted at their first appearance, I have since found altered and enlarged by subsequent revisals, as the author supposed his judgment to grow more exact, and as books or conversation extended his knowledge, and opened his prospects. They are, as I think, improved in general; yet I know not whether they have not lost part of what Temple calls their 'race,' a word which, applied to wines in its primitive sense, means the flavor of the soil."

Of human joy ; yet, with a mingled ray
 Of sadly pleased remembrance, must thou feel
 A mother's love, a mother's tender woe ;
 Who seeks thee still in many a former scene ;
 Seeks thy fair form, thy lovely beaming eyes,
 Thy pleasing converse, by gay lively sense
 Inspired ; where mortal wisdom mildly shone,
 Without the toil of art ; and virtue glow'd,
 In all her smiles, without forbidding pride.

570

But, O thou best of parents ! wipe thy tears ;
 Or rather to Parental Nature pay
 The tears of grateful joy, who for a while
 Lent thee this younger self, this opening bloom
 Of thy enlighten'd mind and gentle worth.
 Believe the Muse ; the wintry blast of death
 Kills not the buds of virtue ; no, they spread,
 Beneath the heavenly beam of brighter suns,
 Through endless ages, into higher powers.

575

580

THE ROMANTIC WATER-FALL.

Thus up the mount, in airy vision wrapp'd, X
 I stray, regardless whither ; till the sound
 Of a near fall of water every sense
 Wakes from the charm of thought : swift shrinking back,
 I check my steps, and view the broken scene.
 Smooth to the shelving brink a copious flood 590
 Rolls fair and placid ; where, collected all
 In one impetuous torrent, down the steep
 It thundering shoots, and shakes the country round.
 At first, an azure sheet, it rushes broad ;
 Then whitening by degrees, as prone it falls,
 And from the loud-resounding rocks below
 Dash'd in a cloud of foam, it sends aloft
 A hoary mist, and forms a ceaseless shower.

585

590

595

Nor can the tortured wave here find repose :
 But, raging still amid the shaggy rocks,
 Now flashes o'er the scatter'd fragments, now
 Aslant the hollow channel rapid darts ;
 And, falling fast from gradual slope to slope,
 With wild, infracted course and lessen'd roar,
 It gains a safer bed, and steals, at last,
 Along the mazes of the quiet vale.

600

Invited from the cliff, to whose dark brow
 He clings, the steep-ascending eagle soars,
 With upward pinions, through the flood of day ;
 And, giving full his bosom to the blaze,
 Gains on the sun : while all the tuneful race,
 Smit by afflictive noon, disorder'd droop,
 Deep in the thicket ; or, from bower to bower
 Responsive, force an interrupted strain.
The stock-dove only through the forest coos,
Mournfully hoarse ; oft ceasing from his plaint,
Short interval of weary woe ! Again

605

610

615

608. *Steep-ascending eagle* : To the eagle mankind have agreed (says Mrs. Ellis) in assigning a sort of regal character, from the majesty of his bearing, and the proud pre-eminence he maintains amongst the feathered tribe; from the sublimity of his chosen home, far above the haunts of man and meaner animals, from the self-seclusion in which he holds himself apart from the general association of living and familiar things, and from the beauty and splendor of his sagacious eye, which shrinks not from the dazzling glare of the sun itself.

615. *The stock-dove* : The wild pigeon of Europe, formerly supposed to be the *stock* whence originated the domestic pigeon, but now regarded as a distinct species. The writer last quoted gives an account of the dove so attractive that it is worthy of being inserted here. Above all other birds (she remarks) the dove is most intimately and familiarly associated with ideas of the quiet seclusion of rural life, and the enjoyment of peace and love. This simple bird, by no means remarkable for its sagacity, so soft in its coloring and graceful in its form, that we cannot behold it without being conscious of its perfect loveliness, is in some instances endowed with an extraordinary instinct, which adds greatly to its poetical interest. That species called the carrier-pigeon, has often been celebrated for the

The sad idea of his murder'd mate,
 Struck from his side by savage fowler's guile,
 Across his fancy comes ; and then resounds
 A louder song of sorrow through the grove.

Beside the dewy border let me sit,
 All in the freshness of the humid air :

There in that hollow'd rock, grotesque and wild,
An ample chair moss-lined, and over head
By flowering umbrage shaded ; where the bee
Strays diligent, and with th' extracted balm
Of fragrant woodbine loads his little thigh.

620

625

THE WONDERS OF THE TORRID ZONE.

Now, while I taste the sweetness of the shade,
 While Nature lies around deep lull'd in noon,
 Now come, bold Fancy, spread a daring flight,
 And view the wonders of the torrid zone ;

630

faithfulness with which it pursues its mysterious way, but never more beautifully than in the following lines by Moore:

The bird let loose in eastern skies,
 When hastening fondly home,
 Ne'er stoops to earth her wing, or flies
 Where idler wanderers roam ;

But high she shoots through air and light,
 Above all low delay,
 Where nothing earthly bounds her flight,
 Or shadow dims her way.

But neither the wonderful instinct of this undeviating messenger, nor even the classical association of two white doves with the queen of love and beauty, are more powerful in awakening poetical ideas than the simple cooing of our own wood-pigeon, heard sometimes in the solemnity of summer's noon, when there is no other sound but the hum of the wandering bee, as he comes laden and rejoicing home, when the sun is alone in the heavens, and the cattle are sleeping in the shade, and not a single breath of air is whispering through the boughs, and the deep dark shadows of the elm and the sycamore lie motionless upon the earth.

- Climes unrelenting ! with whose rage compared,
Yon blaze is feeble, and yon skies are cool.

See, how at once the bright, effulgent Sun,

635

Rising direct, swift chases from the sky

➤ The short-lived twilight ; and with ardent blaze,
Looks gayly fierce through all the dazzling air.

He mounts his throne ; but kind before him sends,

Issuing from out the portals of the morn,

640

The general breeze, to mitigate his fire,

And breathe refreshment on a fainting world.

Great are the scenes, with dreadful beauty crown'd

And barbarous wealth, that see, each circling year,

Returning suns and double seasons pass ;

645

Rocks rich in gems, and mountains big with mines,

That on the high equator ridgy rise,

641. The general breeze: That which blows constantly between the tropics from the east, or the collateral points, the northeast and the southeast, the cause of which is to be ascribed principally to the high comparative temperature of the torrid zone, combined with the rotation of the earth from west to east. The heated air at the surface ascending into the higher regions of the atmosphere, its place is supplied by the colder air rushing from the poles ; which, also becoming rarefied, ascends in its turn, and is carried in the upper regions towards the poles to supply the stream of the under current : these under polar currents moving in progress towards the equator from the zones where the earth's motion is slower, to others where it is more rapid, acquire an apparent relative motion in a westerly direction. The currents from the northern and southern hemispheres meeting near the equator, their meridional motions are there destroyed, and they therefore advance together with the remaining motion from the eastward around the globe. The regularity of the trade-winds is disturbed in some places by local causes, and chiefly by the superior rarefaction of the air over land heated by the sun's raya. They extend further to the northward or southward according as the sun's declination is north or south ; and in some places they are periodical, blowing half of the year in one direction, and the other half in the opposite one.—BRANDE'S CYCLOPEDIA.

645. Returning suns, &c.: In all climates between the tropics, the sun, as he passes and repasses in his annual motion, is twice a year vertical, and thus produces the effect here described.

Whence many a bursting stream auriferous plays ;
 Majestic woods, of every vigorous green,
 Stage above stage, high waving o'er the hills ; 650
 Or, to the far horizon wide diffused,
 A boundless deep immensity of shade.
 Here, lofty trees, to ancient song unknown,
 The noble sons of potent heat and floods,
 Prone rushing from the clouds, rear high to heaven 655
 Their thorny stems, and broad around them throw
 Meridian gloom. Here, in eternal prime,
 Unnumber'd fruits, of keen delicious taste
 And vital spirit, drink amid the cliffs,
 And burning sands, that bank the shrubby vales, 660
 Redoubled day ; yet in their rugged coats
 A friendly juice to cool its rage, contain.

Bear me, Pomona ! to thy citron groves ;
 To where the lemon and the piercing lime,
 With the deep orange, glowing through the green, 665
 Their lighter glories blend. Lay me reclined
 Beneath the spreading tamarind, that shakes,
 Fann'd by the breeze, its fever-cooling fruit.
 Deep in the night the massy locust sheds,
 Quench my hot limbs ; or lead me through the maze 670
 Embowering endless, of the Indian fig ;

648. *Auriferous* : Containing gold among its sands.

661. *Rugged coats* : those of the cocoanut are probably referred to.

663. *Pomona* : An imaginary goddess of fruits and flowers, worshipped in ancient Rome.

667. *Tamarind* : The *Indian date*, that grows to a great height, and is crowned with wide-spreading branches. Its fruit has a grateful acid taste and is preserved in sugar; the pods in which it grows being first removed.

669. *Night* : After this, supply *which*. The sense will thus be made plain.

671. *Indian fig* : *Ficus religiosa*. The Banian-tree of India, celebrated for the great size and number of its trunks, its magnificent shade, and its adaptation to the comfort of animals and of mankind in tropical climates.

Or, thrown at gayer ease, on some fair brow,
 Let me behold, by breezy murmurs cool'd,
 Broad o'er my head the verdant cedar wave,
 And high palmettos lift their graceful shade.
 Or, stretch'd amid these orchards of the sun,
 Give me to drain the cocoa's milky bowl,
 And from the palm to draw its freshening wine!
 More bounteous far than all the frantic juice

675

A single tree, in fact, constitutes a grove, furnishing most beautiful walks, vistas, and cool retreats in summer. The leaves are large, soft, and of a lively green. The fruit is a small fig, when ripe, of a bright scarlet color, affording sustenance to squirrels, monkeys, peacocks, and birds of various kinds which dwell among the branches.

Milton supposes that it was this tree which furnished the leaves for the first garments of Adam and Eve:

Such as at this day to Indians known
 In Malabar or Decan, spreads her arms
 Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
 About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade
 High over-arched, and echoing walks between.

The Hindoos almost pay it divine honors, considering its long duration, its outstretching arms, and its overshadowing beneficence as emblems of the Deity. The Brahmins spend much of their time in meditation under its delightful shade: they plant it near their temples or pagodas; and in villages where these buildings have not been erected the Banyan-tree is the scene of their idol worship. Under its far-reaching branches thousands of human beings, and of the inferior tribes that traverse the earth and the air, may find at one time ample accommodation and subsistence. Consult Dick's Christian Philosopher, chap. ii.

675. *Palmettos*: The palmetto is a species of the palm-tree, indigenous in the West Indies and in the southern part of the United States.

677. The *cocoa-tree* is devoted to a great variety of useful purposes. Boats and frames for houses are made of the trunk. The larger leaves, from ten to fifteen feet long and three feet broad, are used in thatching the houses of the Hindoo natives, and when split lengthwise serve as materials for mats and baskets. The nut yields not only delicious food and drink, but a valuable oil. The branches, when cut, send forth a liquor called toddy, from which an intoxicating beverage is obtained by distillation. The fibres enveloping the shell of the nut are sometimes spun and woven into sail-cloth, or twisted into a cable stronger than any that can be made of hemp. The leaves furnish food to the elephant, and the ashes,

- Which Bacchus pours. Nor, on its slender twigs 680
 Low bending, be the full pomegranate scorn'd ;
 Nor, creeping through the woods, the gelid race
 Of berries. Oft in humble station dwells.
 Unboastful worth, above fastidious pomp.
 Witness, thou best Anana, thou the pride 685
 Of vegetable life, beyond whate'er
 The poets imaged in the golden age :
 Quick let me strip thee of thy tufty coat,
 Spread thy ambrosial stores and feast with Jove !
 From these the prospect varies. Plains immense 690
 Lie stretch'd below, interminable meads,
 And vast savannahs ; where the wandering eye,
 Unfix'd, is in a verdant ocean lost.
 Another Flora there, of bolder hues,

from the potash which they contain, serve the fishermen of Ceylon for soap. The shell is made into cups and various fancy articles.

680. *Bacchus*: The god of the vine, of its fruits, and of the scenes to which the "frantic juice" gives origin, was among the first of the gods that were generally worshipped in the Grecian and Roman territories. His worship virtually is now more prevalent than in ancient times, even in nominally Christian lands.

681. The fruit of the *pomegranate-tree* is about the size of an orange; the pulp, which is acid, and of a reddish color, being inclosed in a hard rind. The latter is highly astringent. This shrubby tree is a native of Italy, Spain, and Barbary.

683-4. Moral reflections and observations like this are perpetually occurring through the poem, and greatly enhance its value, and, to persons of fine moral taste, its interest also.

685. The *Anana* is the pineapple.

692. *Savannahs*: Plains covered with grass and free from trees, affording an unobstructed prospect. *Meads* generally denote grass land, low and wet.

694. *Flora*: A name derived from the goddess of flowers worshipped by the ancients, but now frequently employed to denote a class or collection of flowers belonging to some particular region. Thus we may speak of a European, African, or American Flora. It is here used as a general term for the totality of flowers that adorn the savannahs and meads above mentioned.

- And richer sweets, beyond our garden's pride, 695
 Plays o'er the fields, and showers, with sudden hand,
 Exuberant spring : for oft these valleys shift
 > Their green-embroider'd robe to fiery brown,
 And swift to green again, as scorching suns,
 Or streaming dews and torrent rains, prevail. 700
- Along these lonely regions, where, retired
From little scenes of art, great Nature dwells
In awful solitude, and naught is seen
 But the wild herds that own no master's stall,
 Prodigious rivers roll their fattening seas ; 705
 On whose luxuriant herbage, half conceal'd,
 Like a fall'n cedar, far diffused his train,
 Cased in green scales, the crocodile extends.
 The flood disparts : behold ! in plaited mail,
 Behemoth rears his head. Glanced from his side, 710
 The darted steel in idle shivers flies.
 He fearless walks the plain, or seeks the hills ;
 Where, as he crops his varied fare, the herds,
 In widening circle round, forget their food,
 And at the harmless stranger wondering gaze. 715
- Peaceful beneath primeval trees, that cast

710. *Behemoth* : The hippopotamus, or river-horse ; a grand description of which is furnished in the book of Job, chap. xl. 15-24. Some parts of that description apply more closely to the elephant than to the river-horse ; other parts apply equally well to both. Hence the term behemoth, taken intensively, may be assumed to be a poetical personification of the great Pachydermata, or even Herbivora, wherein the idea of hippopotamus is predominant. Consult Kitto's Cyclopaedia. The hippopotamus lives during the day beneath the waters of its native river, ascending occasionally to the surface for the purpose of breathing ; but at night makes its way to the land to obtain food.

The *crocodile* (708) is included among the animals denoted by Leviathan, in the sacred Scriptures. Among other characteristics the upper and under parts of the body, and the entire tail, are covered with square plates, while the sides of the body are covered with small round scales. Its home is the Nile.

717. The river *Niger* in Africa is chiefly celebrated for the many un-

Their ample shade o'er Niger's yellow stream,
 And where the Ganges rolls his sacred wave ;
 Or, mid the central depth of blackening woods,
 High raised in solemn theatre around, 720
 Leans the huge elephant ; wisest of brutes !
 O truly wise ! with gentle might endow'd,
 Though powerful, not destructive ! Here he sees
 Revolving ages sweep the changeful earth,
 And empires rise and fall ; regardless he 725
 Of what the never-resting race of men
 Project : thrice happy ! could he 'scape their guile,
 Who mine, from cruel avarice, his steps ;
 Or with his towery grandeur swell their state,
 The pride of kings ! or else, his strength pervert, 730

successful and fatal attempts to explore and ascertain its outlet, which was not discovered until 1830 by Richard and John Lander, who went from the coast to Boosa on the Niger, and followed the stream downward till it conveyed them through the channel of the river Nun into the bay of Benin—this channel being one of the numerous mouths of the Niger that form, on the Atlantic coast, a delta of 240 miles. It was at Boosa that Mungo Park and his associates encountered death. For centuries the origin of this river in Western Guinea and a part of its course only were known ; but it was reserved, at this late period, for the enterprise of the Landers to settle the long-agitated question of its local termination.

718. *Sacred wave* : The water of the *Ganges* is regarded by the Hindoos with religious reverence, since they attribute to it an efficacy for their purification from sin. In size and other respects, it is one of the noblest rivers in the world, extending in all its windings, in Hindostan alone, 1300 miles, and thus far from its mouth is navigable.

728. *Who mine, &c.* : This is done by digging pits, which are covered slightly with branches, grass, and earth, and the wild elephant, being driven or allured in the direction of these, falls into them and is captured. For a full account see Rollin's History, vol. v. 147-8. Their use "amid the mortal fray," or in battles, by the ancients, is well known. In his famous battle with Alexander, Porus is said to have employed eighty-five prodigious elephants, which, before the engagement, stood like so many *towers*, and the Indians exasperated them in order that their hideous cry might fill the Macedonians with terror. This may explain the phrase *towery grandeur*

And bid him rage amid the mortal fray,
Astonish'd at the madness of mankind.

Wide o'er the winding umbrage of the floods,
Like vivid blossoms glowing from afar,
Thick swarm the brighter birds. For Nature's hand, 735
That with a sportive vanity has deck'd
The plumpy nations, there her gayest hues
Profusely pours. But if she bids them shine,
Array'd in all the beauteous beams of day,
Yet frugal still, she humbles them in song. 740
Nor envy we the gaudy robes they lent
Proud Montezuma's realm, whose legions cast
A boundless radiance waving on the sun,
While Philomel is ours; while in our shades,
Through the soft silence of the listening night, 745

738-40. *Profusely pours, &c.*: In all the regions of the torrid zone, the birds, though more beautiful in their plumage, are observed to be less melodious than in the temperate zone.

742. *Montezuma's realm*: Mexico. That Montezuma was a *proud* monarch will be seen from Robertson's account of his earliest interview with Cortes. He was in the first place preceded by a thousand persons of distinction, adorned with plumes and clothed in mantles of fine cotton. These announced to Cortes that their monarch was approaching. Next appeared two hundred persons in a uniform dress, with large plumes of feathers, alike in fashion, marching two and two, in deep silence, barefooted, with their eyes fixed on the ground. These were followed by a company of higher rank, in their most showy apparel, in the midst of whom was Montezuma, in a chair or litter richly ornamented with gold, and feathers of various colors. Four of his principal favorites carried him on their shoulders, others supported a canopy of curious workmanship over his head. Before him marched three officers with rods of gold in their hands, which they lifted up on high at certain intervals, and at that signal all the people bowed their heads and hid their faces, as unworthy to look upon so great a monarch. When he drew near, Cortes dismounted, advancing towards him with officious haste, and in a respectful posture. At the same time Montezuma alighted from his chair, and, leaning on the arms of two of his near relations, approached with a slow and stately pace, his attendants covering the streets with cotton cloths, that he might not touch the ground. He scarcely deigned to consider the rest of mankind as of the same species with himself.

\The sober-suited songstress trills her lay.

But come, my Muse, the desert-barrier burst,
A wild expanse of lifeless sand and sky ;
And, swifter than the toiling caravan,
Shoot o'er the vale of Sennar ; ardent climb
To Nubian mountains, and the secret bounds
Of jealous Abyssinia boldly pierce.

750

Thou art no ruffian, who beneath the mask
Of social commerce com'st to rob their wealth ;
No holy fury thou, blaspheming Heaven,
With consecrated steel to stab their peace, —
And through the land yet red from civil wounds,
To spread the purple tyranny of Rome.

755

Thou, like the harmless bee, mayst freely range
From mead to mead, bright with exalted flowers ;
From jasmin grove to grove, mayst wander gay
Through palmy shades and aromatic woods,
That grace the plains, invest the peopled hills,
And up the more than Alpine mountains wave.

760

746. The *sober-suited songstress* : Philomel (the nightingale) is so styled from the plain suit of plumage that she wears, there being nothing showy or brilliant about it.

750. *Sennaar* is a city of Nubia and capital of the kingdom of Sennaar. It has a population of 10,000, and carries on, by caravans, an extensive trade with Egypt, Nigritia, and Arabia. South of Nubia lies *Abyssinia*, whose inhabitants have adopted a system of religion, compounded of Judaism, Christianity, and superstition. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries strenuous efforts were made to proselyte them to the Romish faith, but these efforts were not attended with much success until the seventeenth century, when the Portuguese Jesuits renewed the mission, to spread the *purple tyranny* of Rome. At length, however, the emperor was so exasperated at the changes thus introduced, the exactions they imposed, and the arrogance they displayed, that he banished all the popish missionaries, and their adherents, from his dominions ; and even so lately as a century ago, the edict prohibiting, on the above account, all Europeans to enter Abyssinia, was in force and rigorously executed. To this event, and others naturally growing out of it, the poet plainly alludes (751-758), and then gives a most picturesque account of the physical beauties of an Abyssinian landscape.

There on the breezy summit, spreading fair,
For many a league ; or on stupendous rocks,
That from the sun-redoubling valley lift,
Cool to the middle air, their lawny tops ;
Where palaces and fanes and villas rise,
And gardens smile around, and cultured fields,
And fountains gush, and careless herds and flocks
Securely stray ; a world within itself,
Disdaining all assault ; there let me draw
Ethereal soul, there drink reviving gales,
Profusely breathing from the spicy groves
And vales of fragrance ; there at distance hear
The roaring floods, and cataracts, that sweep
From disembowell'd earth the virgin gold ;
And o'er the varied landscape, restless, rove,
Fervent with life of every fairer kind :
A land of wonders ! which the sun still eyes
With ray direct, as of the lovely realm
Enamor'd, and delighting there to dwell.

How changed the scene ! in blazing height of noon,
The sun, oppress'd, is plunged in thickest gloom. 785
Still horror reigns, a dreary twilight round,
Of struggling night and day malignant mix'd.
For to the hot equator crowding fast,
Where highly rarefied, the yielding air
Admits their stream, incessant vapors roll,
Amazing clouds on clouds continual heap'd ; 790
Or whirl'd tempestuous by the gusty wind,
Or silent borne along, heavy and slow,
With the big stores of steaming oceans charged.
Meantime, amid these upper seas, condensed 795

767. *Sun-redoubling valley* : Valley in which, compared with the adjacent eminences, the sun has double power, especially when in a vertical position.

778. *Virgin gold* : Pure gold.

Around the cold aerial mountain's brow,
 And by conflicting winds together dash'd,
 The thunder holds his black, tremendous throne.
 From cloud to cloud the rending lightnings rage ;
 Till, in the furious elemental war
 Dissolved, the whole precipitated mass
 Unbroken floods and solid torrents pours.

800

MAGNIFICENT RIVERS.

The treasures these, hid from the bounded search
 Of ancient knowledge ; whence, with annual pomp,
 Rich king of floods ! o'erflows the swelling Nile.
 From his two springs, in Gojam's sunny realm,
 Pure welling out, he through the lucid lake
 Of fair Dambea rolls his infant stream.
 There, by the naiads nursed, he sports away
 His playful youth amid the fragrant isles,
 That with unfading verdure smile around.
 Ambitious thence the manly river breaks ;
 And, gathering many a flood, and copious fed
 With all the mellow'd treasures of the sky,

805

810

803-5. The author here refers to the previous paragraph as containing an explanation of the annual overflows of the Nile—a phenomenon which the ancients failed to account for. The poet claims also to indicate the sources of the Nile in two springs *welling out* (issuing out) in *Gojam*, which probably denotes a province of Abyssinia. But he has been more exact and explicit than history warrants. It has hitherto been ascertained, only, that the various branches of the Nile have an origin somewhere in the high lands of Africa, north of the equator, in what are called the Mountains of the Moon. The Nile, yet a small stream, runs through the lake *Dembea*, situated in the interior of Abyssinia. The whole length of this splendid river is not far from 2000 miles.

805. *By the naiads nursed*: A classical conception of great beauty. The Nile in its infancy is represented as being nursed in the lake *Dembea* by the fair goddesses that preside over fountains and rivers. The progressive growth and ever-swelling majesty of the river are finely described.

Winds in progressive majesty along :

815

Through splendid kingdoms now devolves his maze,
Now wanders wild o'er solitary tracts
Of life-deserted sand ; till, glad to quit
The joyless desert, down the Nubian rocks,
From thundering steep to steep, he pours his urn, 820
And Egypt joys beneath the spreading wave.

His brother Niger too, and all the floods
In which the full-form'd maids of Afric lave
Their jetty limbs ; and all that from the tract
Of woody mountains stretch'd through gorgeous Ind, 825
Fall on Cormandel's coast, or Malabar ;

From Menam's orient stream, that nightly shines
With insect lamps, to where Aurora sheds
On Indus' smiling banks the rosy shower :
All, at this bounteous season, ope their urns,

830

And pour untoiling harvest o'er the land.

Nor less thy world, Columbus, drinks, refresh'd,
The lavish moisture of the melting year.

Wide o'er his isles the branching Oronoque

816. *Devolves his maze*: Rolls down his winding course.

825. *Ind*; for *India*. *Menam* is a large river of Siam, on whose banks the vast multitude of fire-flies make a brilliant appearance at night.

832. *Thy world*: The continent of America; called his world because discovered by him.

834. *Oronogue*: This river takes its rise in the centre of the Republic of Colombia, and after a course of 1400 miles enters the Atlantic by an extended delta of mouths, opposite the Island of Trinidad. The poet refers to the valuable trees (*life-sufficing*) on the banks of this stream, to which the natives are driven for safety when the river is overflowed, and from which they derive supplies of various sorts. The reference, probably, is to the cocoanut-tree, which has been already described in note 677, "Spring."

A passage in St. Pierre's Studies of Nature affords a good illustration of the text:—"The inundations of rivers, such as the Amazon, Oronoco, and many others, are periodical. They manure the lands they inundate; and it is well known that the banks of these rivers swarmed with populous nations before Europeans settled there. The inhabitants were benefited

Rolls a brown deluge ; and the native drives
To dwell aloft on life-sufficing trees,
At once his dome, his robe, his food, and arms.
Swell'd by a thousand streams, impetuous hurl'd
From all the roaring Andes, huge descends
The mighty Orellana. Scarce the Muse *line* 840
Dares stretch her wing o'er this enormous mass
Of rushing water. Scarce she dares attempt
The sea-like Plata ; to whose dread expanse,
Continuous depth, and wondrous length of course,
Our floods are rills. With unabated force, *line* 845
In silent dignity they sweep along,
And traverse realms unknown, and blooming wilds,
And fruitful deserts, worlds of solitude ;
Where the sun smiles and seasons teem in vain,
Unseen and unenjoy'd. Forsaking these, *line* 850

from these inundations, by the abundance of the fisheries and the fertility of the lands. So far from considering them as convulsions of nature, they received them as blessings from Heaven; just as the Egyptians prized the overflowings of the Nile. Was it then a mortifying spectacle to see their deep forests intersected with water, which they could traverse in their canoes, and pick the fruits at their ease! Nay, certain tribes of the Oronoco (or Oronoque), determined by these accommodations, had acquired the singular habit of dwelling on the tops of trees, and seeking under their foliage a habitation, food, and a fortress. Most of them, however, inhabited only the banks of rivers, and preferred them to the surrounding deserts, though not exposed to inundations."

840. The *Orellana* is the river Amazon, deriving the first of these names from its discoverer, Francesoo Orellano, who, leaving Peru in 1540, was the first European that sailed down the river Amazon to the Atlantic. He gave this latter name to the river from the circumstance that he observed upon its banks companies of armed women. The original name of the river was Maranon. Its length is 3300 miles: it has a breadth of 150 miles at its mouth, and even at the distance of 1500 miles from its mouth is 180 feet deep.

843. *Sea-like Plata*: Being 150 miles broad at its mouth, and at Montevideo, 60 miles up the river, is so broad that from the centre of the channel the land on either side cannot be discerned. It is navigable in large boats 1000 miles, which is about half of its entire length.

O'er peopled plains they fair diffusive flow,
 And many a nation feed, and circle safe
 In their soft bosom, many a happy isle,
 The seat of blameless Pan, yet undisturb'd
 ✓ By Christian crimes and Europe's cruel sons.
 Thus pouring on they proudly seek the deep,
 Whose vanquish'd tide, recoiling from the shock,
 Yields to the liquid weight of half the globe ;
 And Ocean trembles for his green domain.

855

THE ADVANTAGES OF TROPICAL CLIMES OVERBALANCED BY THEIR
 PECULIAR DISADVANTAGES.

But what avails this wondrous waste of wealth ? 860
 This gay profusion of luxurious bliss ?
 This pomp of Nature ? what their balmy meads,
 Their powerful herbs, and Ceres void of pain,
 By vagrant birds dispersed, and wasting winds ?
 What their unplanted fruits ? what the cool draughts, 865
 Th' ambrosial food, rich gums, and spicy health,
 Their forests yield ? their toiling insects what,

854. *Pan*: A Grecian deity, who was honored as the god of the natural world; this name signifying *the whole*: or his name may be derived from a word which signifies to *tend flocks*, and thus applies to him as the god of shepherds and of men in a rude, uncultivated state. He is here put as the god or representative of the men of those regions while yet uncorrupted by European vices.

857-9. These lines receive illustration from the account which Robertson gives of the Orinoco. It rolls towards the ocean such a vast body of water, and rushes into it with such impetuous force, that when it meets the tide, which on that coast rises to an uncommon height, their collision occasions a swell and agitation of the waves no less surprising than formidable. In this conflict the irresistible torrent of the river so far prevails that it refreshes the ocean many leagues with its flood.

863. *Ceres void of pain*: Crops that cost no severe labor—spontaneous products of the earth. Ceres, the goddess of agriculture and of the products of the earth, is here put for those products that were attributed to her power and energy.

Their silky pride, and vegetable robes ?
 Ah ! what avail their fatal treasures, hid
 Deep in the bowels of the pitying earth,
 Golconda's gems, and sad Potosi's mines ;

870

868-9. Fatal treasures : The precious metals, by attracting the cupidity and lawless violence of Spanish adventurers, were fatal to the happiness and life of the *gentle children of the sun*—the simple sun-burnt natives of those regions. The word *pitying* conveys the beautiful sentiment, that the earth, in pity to the natives, and for their security from foreign rapacity, had hid her precious minerals deep in her bowels, that they might not be discovered.

But these rich mines of silver and gold were exceedingly detrimental also to the country that sent forth its greedy adventurers to exhaust them. Previous to their discovery Spain was an industrious and thriving country. Under the reigns of Ferdinand and Isabella, and Charles V., Spain was one of the most industrious countries in Europe. Her manufactures in wool, and flax, and silk, were so extensive as not only to furnish what was sufficient for her own consumption, but to afford a surplus for exportation. The new market now opened in America naturally added great vivacity and excitement to the spirit of industry. Nourished and invigorated by this, the manufactures, the population, and wealth of Spain might have gone on increasing in the same proportion with the growth of her colonies. Her marine was also in a very flourishing condition. But, as Robertson further remarks, “the same thing happens to nations as to individuals. Wealth which flows in gradually and with moderate increase, feeds and nourishes that activity which is friendly to commerce, and calls it forth into vigorous and well-conducted exertions; but when opulence pours in suddenly, and with too full a stream, it overturns all sober, plans of industry, and brings along with it a taste for what is wild and extravagant and daring in business or in action.” Philip II. and Philip III., men of inferior talents, were tempted, under this impulse, to engage in expensive wars, draining their country of men and treasure. The rage for emigration to the new countries carried off more of the industrious classes than could be spared. These depended on Spain for their supplies, but her flourishing manufactures having declined, the supply was sought from other countries, so that in a short time not more than the twentieth part of the commodities exported to America was of Spanish growth or fabric. Thus were the riches and strength of Spain rapidly diminished; so that from the close of the sixteenth century she has not been able to supply the growing wants of her colonies, but other more industrious nations have enriched themselves at her expense.

871. Golconda's gems : A province of Hindoostan abounding in diamonds. *Potosi*, in Bolivia, South America, distinguished for the rich silver mines

Where dwelt the gentlest children of the sun ?

What all that Afric's golden rivers roll,

Her odorous woods, and shining ivory stores ?

Ill-fated race ! the softening arts of peace,

875

Whate'er the humanizing Muses teach ;

The godlike wisdom of the temper'd breast ;

Progressive truth, the patient force of thought ;

Investigation calm, whose silent powers

Command the world ; the light that leads to heaven ;

880

Kind equal rule, the government of laws,

And all-protecting freedom, which alone

Sustains the name and dignity of man :

These are not theirs. The parent sun himself

Seems o'er this world of slaves to tyrannize ;

885

And, with oppressive ray, the roseate bloom

Of beauty blasting, gives the gloomy hue,

And feature gross ; or worse, to ruthless deeds,

Mad jealousy, blind rage, and fell revenge,

Their fervid spirit fires. Love dwells not there.

890

The soft regards, the tenderness of life,

The heart-shed tear, th' ineffable delight

Of sweet humanity ; these court the beam

Of milder climes ; in selfish fierce desire,

found in a conical mountain near by ; but they are now considerably exhausted.

876. *Humanizing Muses*: Female deities that fostered the fine arts and sciences, such as poetry, music, painting, rhetoric, astronomy, &c. "It appears probable," says Brande, "that the early Grecian poets, struck with the beauty and sublimity of the scenery in this part of Greece (Helicon and the region around Parnassus), ascribed the humanizing influence it was so well fitted to exercise over the mind to the agency of the nymphs and other tutelary deities of the place, to whom they gave the name of Muses." This name is supposed to have been derived from an old Greek verb, meaning *to inquire* or *invent* : and the Muses, accordingly, are, philosophically, to be regarded only as personifications of the inventive powers of the mind as displayed in the various liberal arts and sciences.

And the wild fury of voluptuous sense,
There lost. The very brute creation there
This rage partakes, and burns with horrid fire.

895

Lo ! the green serpent, from his dark abode,
Which e'en Imagination fears to tread,
At noon forth issuing, gathers up his train
In orbs immense, then, darting out anew,
Seeks the refreshing fount ; by which diffused,
He throws his folds ; and while, with threatening tongue,
And deathful jaws erect, the monster curls
His flaming crest, all other thirst, appall'd,
Or shivering flies, or check'd at distance stands,
Nor dares approach. But still more direful he,
The small close-lurking minister of fate,

900

905

898. *Green serpent*: Allusion probably is made to the *Coluberidae*, which "are particularly distinguished by the power of dilating the opening of the jaws to an enormous extent, so as to permit of animals being swallowed which are much larger than the diameter of the serpent itself. This is accomplished by the separation of the jaw-bones into various pieces, which are very movable on one another and on the skull. The most remarkable species of this family are the *Boa Constrictors* of the New World and the *Pythones* of the Old ; these, when full grown, attain the length of from thirty to forty feet, and in thickness nearly equal a man's body. They do not fear to attack any animal ; and if they can once coil themselves round it, crush it by the enormous combined power of their muscles, in spite of all its means of resistance and defence. Their power is much increased by coiling the tail round a tree, so as to give a point of support from which the muscles may act more efficiently ; and it is in this manner that they commonly wait for their prey. When they have seized and entirely destroyed it by crushing, in which process all the principal bones are broken, they begin to swallow it. The process of digestion takes some days or weeks, according to the size of the prey, and during that time the monster lies in a very inactive state. The hair, horns, and other least digestible parts are usually disgorged during the process."

905. *All other thirst*, &c.: According to the reading of the text, *thirst* is personified, and is represented as suffering and doing that which the animals under its influence suffer and do.

907. The *Viper*, probably, is here referred to, and especially the horned viper, or *Cerastes*, which is an extremely venomous species.

- Whose high-concocted venom through the veins
 A rapid lightning darts, arresting swift 910
 The vital current ; form'd to humble man,
 This child of vengeful nature ! There, sublimed
 To fearless lust of blood, the savage race
 Roam, licensed by the shading hour of guilt,
 And foul misdeed, when the pure day has shut 915
 His sacred eye. The tiger darting fierce
 Impetuous on the prey his glance has doom'd ;
 The lively shining leopard, speckled o'er
 With many a spot, the beauty of the waste ;
 And, scorning all the taming arts of man, 920
 The keen hyena, fellest of the fell :
 These, rushing from th' inhospitable woods
 Of Mauretania, or the tufted isles

912. As a recent writer has observed, in fearful pre-eminence amongst those animals commonly considered repulsive and degraded is the *serpent*, whose history is unavoidably associated with the introduction of sin and sorrow into the world. Whether from this association, or from an instinctive horror of its "venomous tooth," it is certain that the serpent is more generally dreaded and more loathed, even by those who do not fear it, than any other living thing ; and yet how beautiful is its sagacious eye, how rich and splendid its coloring ; how delicate the tracery of network thrown all over its glossy scales, how graceful and easy its meandering movements, as it winds itself in among the rustling grass ; how much like one of the fairest objects in nature, a clear blue river wandering through a distant valley !

923. *Mauritania* : Ancient Latin name for the African territory now occupied by the kingdoms of Fez and Morocco, in the neighborhood of the Straits of Gibraltar—while the term *Libya* (924) characterizes generally the northern part of Africa extending between Mauritania on the west and Egypt on the east, and to an indefinite limit southward. It embraces the modern kingdoms of Tunis and Tripoli. Sometimes *Libya* is used for the whole African continent. The *tufted* isles are those verdant spots, of great beauty and utility, that are occasionally met with in crossing the vast sandy deserts of Africa. They are watered by springs. The name *Oasis* is usually applied to such a spot. These spots being sometimes found in clusters, the word *tufted* is here used to express that fact.

- That verdant rise amid the Libyan wild,
 Innumerous glare around their shaggy king,
 Majestic stalking o'er the printed sand ;
 And, with imperious and repeated roars,
 Demand their fated food. The fearful flocks
 Crowd near the guardian swain. The nobler herds,
 Where round their lordly bull in rural ease
 They ruminating lie, with horror hear
 The coming rage. Th' awaken'd village starts ;
 And to her fluttering breast the mother strains
 Her thoughtless infant. From the pirate's den,
 Or stern Morocco's tyrant fang escaped,
 The wretch half wishes for his bonds again :
 While, uproar all, the wilderness resounds,
 From Atlas eastward to the frightened Nile.
 ✓ Unhappy he ! who from the first of joys, X
Society, cut off, is left alone
Amid this world of death. Day after day,
 Sad on the jutting eminence he sits,
 And views the main that ever toils below ;
 Still fondly forming in the farthest verge,
 Where the round ether mixes with the wave,
 Ships, dim-discover'd, dropping from the clouds :
 At evening, to the setting sun he turns
 A mournful eye, and down his dying heart
 Sinks helpless ; while the wonted roar is up,
 And hiss continual through the tedious night.
 ✓ | Yet here, e'en here, into these black abodes
 Of monsters, unappall'd, from stooping Rome,
 And guilty Cæsar, Liberty retired,

925. *Shaggy king* : The lion.

938. *Atlas* : A range of mountains in the northwestern part of Africa, extending to the Great Sahara desert southward. Its higher summits are covered with perpetual snow, being about 12,000 feet high above the level of the ocean.

Her Cato following through Numidian wilds :
 Disdainful of Campania's gentle plains,
 And all the green delights Ausonia pours ;
 When for them she must bend the servile knee,
 And fawning take the splendid robber's boon.

955

THE CARAVAN OF MECCA.

Nor stop the terrors of these regions here.
 Commission'd demons oft, angels of wrath,
 Let loose the raging elements. Breathed hot
 From all the boundless furnace of the sky,
 And the wide glittering waste of burning sand,
 A suffocating wind the pilgrim smites
 With instant death. Patient of thirst and toil,
 Son of the desert ! even the camel feels,
 Shot through his wither'd heart, the fiery blast.
 Or from the black-red ether, bursting broad,
 Sallies the sudden whirlwind. Straight the sands,
 Commoved around, in gathering eddies play :
 Nearer and nearer still they darkening come ;
 Till, with the general, all-involving storm
 Swept up, the whole continuous wilds arise ;

960

965

970

954. *Cato* : Marcus Cato, the great-grandson of M. Portius Cato, the Censor. When Rome was stooping to the yoke of designing men ; when Pompey, Cæsar, and Crassus formed a triumvirate for purposes adverse to popular liberty, he opposed them. After the triumph of Julius Cæsar over his rival, Pompey, the friends of the Roman Republic rallied their forces in Africa under the guidance of Cato and Scipio, and enjoyed the aid of the king of Numidia. But these forces were defeated, and Cato, rather than fall into the hands of Cæsar, put an end to his own life with a dagger, at Utica, from which occurrence he is known by the surname of *Uticensis*. This defeat reduced to an entire wreck the republican party, and elevated "guilty" Cæsar to imperial power, in fact, though not in name.

955-6. *Campania* : A fertile and much celebrated district of Southern Italy. *Ausonia* designates the entire southern part of Italy.

And by their noonday fount dejected thrown,
 Or sunk at night in sad disastrous sleep, 975
 Beneath descending hills, the caravan
 Is buried deep. In Cairo's crowded streets,
 Th' impatient merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
 And Mecca saddens at the long delay.

DISASTERS IN TROPICAL SEAS.

But chief at sea, whose every flexile wave 980
 Obeys the blast, th' aerial tumult swells.
 In the dread ocean, undulating wide,
 Beneath the radiant line that girts the globe,
 The circling Typhon, whirl'd from point to point,
 Exhausting all the rage of all the sky, 985
 And dire Ecnephia reign. Amid the heavens,
 Falsely serene, deep in a cloudy speck
 Compress'd, the mighty tempest brooding dwells.
 Of no regard, save to the skilful eye,
 Fiery and foul, the small prognostic hangs 990
 Aloft, or on the promontory's brow
 Musters its force. A faint, deceitful calm,
 A fluttering gale, the demon sends before,
 To tempt the spreading sail. Then down at once,
 Precipitant descends a mingled mass 995
 Of roaring winds, and flame, and rushing floods.
 In wild amazement fix'd, the sailor stands.
 Art is too slow : by rapid fate oppress'd,
 His broad-wing'd vessel drinks the whelming tide,
 Hid in the bosom of the black abyss. 1000

984-6. *Typhon* and *Ecnephia*: Names of particular storms or hurricanes known only between the tropics.

987. *Cloudy speck*: Called by sailors the Ox-eye, being in appearance, at first, no larger.

With such mad seas the daring Gama fought,
 For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
Incessant, laboring round the stormy Cape ;
 By bold ambition led, and bolder thirst
 Of gold. For then, from ancient gloom, emerged 1005
 The rising world of trade. The Genius, then,
 Of navigation, that in hopeless sloth,
 Had slumber'd on the vast Atlantic deep,
 For idle ages, starting, heard at last
 The Lusitanian prince ; who, heaven-inspired, 1010
 To love of useful glory roused mankind,
 And in unbounded commerce mix'd the world.
 Increasing still the terrors of these storms,
 His jaws horrific arm'd with threefold fate,
 Here dwells the direful shark. Lured by the scent 1015
 Of steaming crowds, of rank disease, and death,

1001. *Gama*: Vasco De Gama, the first who sailed round Africa by the Cape of Good Hope; and pursued his voyage along the eastern coast of Africa to Malabar, in 1498.

1010. *The Lusitanian prince*: The Portuguese prince (*Lusitania* being the Latin name of Portugal) here spoken of was Don Henry, the fourth son of John the First, king of Portugal—a man of an accomplished mind, enlarged views, daring enterprise, and lofty patriotism, by whom the Portuguese were excited to great improvements and discoveries in navigation. He had the address also to enlist in favor of his schemes a Papal decree, issued at his entreaty by Pope Eugene IV., by which all the countries that should be discovered south of Cape Non in Africa should be under the exclusive jurisdiction of Portugal, the prince having promised to establish in them the authority of the "Holy See." The spirit of discovery, being thus associated with a zeal for religion, was greatly strengthened. It received a check, however, for a time, by the death of this enterprising prince in 1463. In that dark age, no doubt was entertained of the power of the Roman Pontiff to assign to what government he chose, the dominion of the yet undiscovered portions of the earth.

1016. *Steaming crowds*: Some of the horrors of the slave-trade are here powerfully drawn;—those that occur in the slave-ship from crowding hundreds in the hold—depriving them of pure air and exercise, and opportunity for cleanliness—and engendering fatal disease, so that a

Behold ! he rushing cuts the briny flood,
 Swift as the gale can bear the ship along,
 And, from the partners of that cruel trade
Which spoils unhappy Guinea of her sons.

1020

Demands his share of prey ; demands themselves.

The stormy fates descend ; one death involves
 Tyrants and slaves ; when straight, their mangled limbs
 Crashing at once, he dyes the purple seas

With gore, and riots in the vengeful meal.

1025

PESTILENCE AT CARTHAGENA—THE PLAGUE.

When o'er this world, by equinoctial rains
 Flooded immense, looks out the joyless sun,
 And draws the copious steam ; from swampy fens,
 Where putrefaction into life ferments,

And breathes destructive myriads ; or from woods, 1030

Impenetrable shades, recesses foul,
 In vapors rank and blue corruption wrapp'd,
 Whose gloomy horrors yet no desperate foot
 Has ever dared to pierce ; then wasteful, forth
 Walks the dire Power of pestilent disease.

1035

A thousand hideous fiends her course attend,
 Sick Nature blasting, and to heartless woe,
 And feeble desolation, casting down
 The towering hopes and all the pride of man :
 Such as, of late, at Cartagena quench'd 1040

The British fire. You, gallant Vernon, saw
 The miserable scene ; you, pitying, saw

very large proportion of the slaves put on board is lost during the passage.

1042. *Cartagena* : A city of Colombia, South America. It stands upon an island, which is joined to the main-land by two bridges. In 1826 its population was 26,000. The pestilence occurred in 1740, when Admiral Vernon was endeavoring to take the town, and was one of the

To infant weakness sunk the warrior's arm ;
 Saw the deep-racking pang, the ghastly form,

The lip pale-quivering, and the beamless eye,

1045

No more with ardor bright. You heard the groans
 Of agonizing ships from shore to shore ;
 Heard, nightly plunged amid the sullen waves,
 The frequent corse ; while on each other fix'd,
 In sad presage, the blank assistants seem'd,
 Silent, to ask, whom Fate would next demand.

1050

What need I mention those inclement skies,
 Where, frequent o'er the sickening city, Plague,
 The fiercest child of Nemesis divine,
 Descends ? From Ethiopia's poison'd woods,
 From stifled Cairo's filth, and fetid fields
 With locust armies putrefying heap'd,
 This great destroyer sprung. Her awful rage
 The brutes escape : man is her destined prey,
 Intemperate man ! and, o'er his guilty domes,

1055

1060

events that prevented him from completing his design. See Russell's Modern Europe, vol. ii. 414-17.

1046-9. *You heard, &c.* : Not only the eye, but the ear, is called as a witness, and a terrible one it proves.—C. This passage in the poem has been thus judiciously characterized by Dr. Blair :—All the circumstances are properly chosen, for setting this dismal scene in a strong light before our eyes. But what is most striking in the picture, is the last image. We are conducted through all the scenes of distress till we come to the mortality prevailing in the fleet, which a vulgar poet would have described by exaggerated expressions concerning the multiplied trophies and victories of death. But how much more is the imagination impressed by this single circumstance of dead bodies thrown overboard every night ; of the constant sound of their falling into the waters, and of the Admiral listening to this melancholy sound so often striking the ear ! This passage shows the power of a single well-chosen circumstance to heighten a description.

1054. *Nemesis divine* : Allusion is here made to a Grecian goddess, the personification of the retributive justice of the gods. The Plague is here poetically represented as her child, because it is often employed as an instrument of divine justice and retribution.

1055-8. Dr. Mead assigns these as causes of the plague.

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She draws a close incumbent cloud of death ;
 Uninterrupted by the living winds,
 Forbid to blow a wholesome breeze ; and stain'd
 With many a mixture by the sun, suffused,
 Of angry aspect. Princely wisdom, then, 1065
 Dejects his watchful eye ; and from the hand
 Of feeble justice, ineffectual, drop
 The sword and balance. Mute the voice of joy,
 And hush'd the clamor of the busy world.
 Empty the streets, with uncouth verdure clad ; 1070
 Into the worst of deserts sudden turn'd
 The cheerful haunt of men ; unless escaped
 From the doom'd house, where matchless horror reigns,
 Shut up by barbarous fear, the smitten wretch,
 With phrensy wild, breaks loose ; and, loud to Heaven 1075
 Screaming, the dreadful policy arraigns,
 Inhuman, and unwise. The sullen door,
 Yet uninfected, on its cautious hinge
 Fearing to turn, abhors society :
 Dependents, friends, relations, Love himself, 1080
 Savaged by woe, forget the tender tie,
 The sweet engagement of the feeling heart.
 But vain their selfish care : the circling sky,
 The wide enlivening air is full of fate ;
 And, struck by turns, in solitary pangs 1085
 They fall, unbliss'd, untended, and unmourn'd.
 Thus o'er the prostrate city black Despair
 Extends her raven wing ; while, to complete

1068. *The sword and balance* : The instruments, or emblems, of Justice : the balance to determine the amount of wrong to be punished, and the sword to inflict the appropriate punishment.

1084. *Fate* : Death as an unavoidable event.

1088. *Raven wing* : The raven has always been regarded by the superstitious as a bird of ill omen ; and much (says Mrs. Ellis) as we may be disposed to despise such prognostications as the flight or the cry of different birds, there is something in the habits, but especially in the voice of the raven,

The scene of desolation, stretch'd around,
The grim guards stand, denying all retreat,
And give the flying wretch a better death:

1090

Much yet remains unsung : the rage intense
Of brazen vaulted skies, of iron fields,
Where drought and famine starve the blasted year ;
Fired by the torch of noon to tenfold rage,

1095

Th' infuriate hill that shoots the pillar'd flame ;
And, roused within the subterranean world,
Th' expanding earthquake, that resistless shakes
Aspiring cities from their solid base,

And buries mountains in the flaming gulf.

1100

But 'tis enough. Return, my vagrant Muse :
A nearer scene of horror calls thee home.

A TREMENDOUS STORM IN BRITAIN. X

Tell me, if you can, what it is about this poem that makes it so terrible?

Behold, slow settling o'er the lurid grove,
Unusual darkness broods ; and growing gains
The full possession of the sky, surcharged
With wrathful vapor, from the secret beds,
Where sleep the mineral generations, drawn.
Thence nitre, sulphur, and the fiery spume

1105

which gives it a strange and almost fearful character. It seems to hold no communion with the joyous spirits, to have no association with the happy scenes of earth, but leads a lengthened and unsocial life amongst the gloomy shades of the venerable forest, in the deep recesses of the pathless mountain, or on the rocky summit of the beetling crag that overlooks the ocean's blue abyss ; and when it goes forth, with its sable pinions spread *like the wings of a dark angel* upon the wind, its hoarse and hollow croak echoes from rock to rock, as if telling, in those dreary and appalling tones, of the fleshy feast to which it is hastening, of the death-pangs of the mountain deer, of the cry of the perishing kid, and of the bones of the shipwrecked seaman whitening in the surge.

1103-68. The coming of the summer thunder-storm is painted by a masterly hand—terrible at once, and soft.—C.

- Of fat bitumen, steaming on the day,
With various-tinctured trains of latent flame, 1110
Pollute the sky, and in yon baleful cloud,
A reddening gloom, a magazine of fate
Ferment ; till, by the touch ethereal roused,
The dash of clouds, or irritating war
Of fighting winds, while all is calm below, 1115
They furious spring. A boding silence reigns,
Dread through the dun expanse ; save the dull sound
That from the mountain, previous to the storm,
Rolls o'er the muttering earth, disturbs the flood,
And shakes the forest-leaf without a breath. 1120
- Prone to the lowest vale the aerial tribes ↗
Descend : the tempest-loving raven scarce ↗
Dares wing the dubious dusk. In rueful gaze
The cattle stand, and on the scowling heavens
Cast a deplored eye ; by man forsook, 1125
Who to the crowded cottage hies him fast,
Or seeks the shelter of the downward cave.
- 'Tis listening fear, and dumb amazement all :
When to the startled eye the sudden glance ↗
Appears far south, eruptive through the cloud ; 1130
And, following slower, in explosion vast,
The thunder raises his tremendous voice.
At first, heard solemn o'er the verge of heaven,
The tempest growls ; but as it nearer comes,
And rolls its awful burden on the wind, 1135
The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more
The noise astounds : till overhead a sheet
Of livid flame discloses wide ; then shuts
And opens wider ; shuts and opens still S!
Expansive, wrapping ether in a blaze. 1140
Follows the loosen'd aggravated roar,

- Enlarging, deepening, mingling ; peal on peal
Crush'd horrible, convulsing heaven and earth.
- Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
Or prone-descending rain. Wide rent, the clouds 1145
Pour a whole flood ; and yet, its flame unquench'd,
Th' unconquerable lightning struggles through,
Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
And fires the mountains with redoubled rage.
- Black from the stroke, above, the smouldering pine 1150
Stands a sad shatter'd trunk ; and, stretch'd below,
A lifeless group, the blasted cattle lie :
Here the soft flocks, with that same harmless look
They wore alive, and ruminating still
In fancy's eye ; and there the frowning bull, 1155
And ox half-raised. Struck on the castled cliff,
The venerable tower and spiry fane
Resign their aged pride. The gloomy woods
Start at the flash, and from their deep recess,
Wide flaming out, their trembling inmates shake. 1160
Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud
The repercussive roar : with mighty crush,

1150-56. *Black from the stroke*, &c. : Dugald Stewart selects this passage as an example of the *picturesque* in writing, by which he means that *graphical* power by which poetry and eloquence produce effects on the mind analogous to those of a picture. He does not limit that epithet to objects of sight, but extends it to all those details, of whatever kind, by a happy selection of which the imagination may be forcibly impressed. The epithet *picturesque* is also applied by Dr. Warton to a passage in "Winter" (732-38), where every circumstance mentioned recalls some impression upon the ear alone.—STEWART'S WORKS, vol. iv. 224-5.

1161. *Carnarvon*, or Caernarvonshire, is a northern county of Wales, very rugged. Its mountains are called in general the Cambrian Alps—*Snowden's peak* occupies a lofty central position among them, being 3571 feet above the level of the sea. *Penmaenmaur* is an inferior mountain elevation in the same county. The *Cheviot heights* are a range of low mountains in the north of England, and passing beyond the border into Scotland. They are chiefly famous as the scene of bloody warfare between the English and the Scotch before the union of the two kingdoms.

Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks
 Of Penmanmaur heap'd hideous to the sky,
 Tumble the smitten cliffs; and Snowden's peak, 1165
 Dissolving, instant yields his wintry load.
 Far seen, the heights of heathy Cheviot blaze,
 And Thulè bellows through her utmost isles.

SAD TALE OF CELADON AND AMELIA. X

Guilt hears appall'd, with deeply troubled thought ;
 And yet not always on the guilty head 1170
 Descends the fated flash. Young Celadon
 And his Amelia were a matchless pair ;
 With equal virtue form'd, and equal grace,
 The same, distinguish'd by their sex alone :
 Hers the mild lustre of the blooming morn, 1175
 And his the radiance of the risen day.

They loved : but such the guileless passion was,
 As in the dawn of time inform'd the heart
 Of innocence, and undissembling truth :
 'Twas friendship heighten'd by the mutual wish. 1180
 Th' enchanting hope and sympathetic glow,
 Beam'd from the mutual eye. Devoting all
 To love, each was to each a dearer self ;
 Supremely happy in th' awaken'd power
 Of giving joy. Alone, amid the shades, 1185
 Still in harmonious intercourse they lived

The ancient ballad of Chevy Chace celebrates the fierce encounter between the Earls Percy and Douglas.

1168. *Thulè* : Thomson speaks of her *utmost isles*, as they at one time formed the extreme northern limit of geographical knowledge, and hence called *Ultima Thule*. There is a dispute about the precise location designated by this name among the ancients. The Thule mentioned by Tacitus corresponds with *Mainland*, the largest of the forty Shetland islands off the northern coast of Scotland. To this Thomson seems to refer.

1178. *Informed* : Animated.

The rural day, and talk'd the flowing heart,
 Or sigh'd and look'd unutterable things.

So pass'd their life, a clear, united stream,
 By care unruffled ; till, in evil hour,
 The tempest caught them on the tender walk,
 Heedless how far and where its mazes stray'd ;
 While, with each other bless'd, creative love
 Still bade eternal Eden smile around.

Presaging instant fate, her bosom heaved
 Unwonted sighs, and, stealing oft a look
 Of the big gloom, on Celadon her eye
 Fell tearful, wetting her disorder'd cheek.

In vain, assuring love and confidence
 In Heaven repress'd her fear ; it grew, and shook
 Her frame near dissolution. He perceived

Th' unequal conflict ; and as angels look
 On dying saints, his eyes compassion shed,
 With love illumined high. "Fear not," he said,
 "Sweet innocence ! thou stranger to offence,

And inward storm ! He, who yon skies involves
 In frowns of darkness, ever smiles on thee
 With kind regard. O'er thee the secret shaft
 That wastes at midnight, or th' undreaded hour
 Of noon, flies harmless ; and that very voice,

Which thunders terror through the guilty heart,
 With tongues of seraphs, whispers peace to thine.
 'Tis safety to be near thee sure, and thus

To clasp perfection !" From his void embrace,
 (Mysterious Heaven !) that moment, to the ground, 1215
 A blacken'd corpse, was struck the beauteous maid.
 But who can paint the lover, as he stood,
 Pierced by severe amazement, hating life,

1193. *Creative love* : Their mutual love transformed the scene around them into another Eden, or caused them to regard it as such.

Speechless, and fix'd in all the death of woe !
So, (faint resemblance !) on the marble tomb,
The well-dissembled mourner stooping stands,
Forever silent and forever sad.

As from the face of heaven, the shatter'd clouds
Tumultuous rove, th' interminable sky
Sublimer swells, and o'er the world expands
A purer azure. Through the lighten'd air,
A higher lustre and a clearer calm,
Diffusive, tremble ; while, as if in sign
Of danger past, a glittering robe of joy,
Set off abundant by the yellow ray,
Invests the fields : and nature smiles. revived.

'Tis beauty all, and grateful song around, X
Join'd to the low of kine, and numerous bleat
Of flocks, thick nibbling through the clover'd vale
And shall the hymn be marr'd by thankless man,
Most favor'd ! who with voice articulate
Should lead the chorus of this lower world ?
Shall he, so soon forgetful of the Hand
That hush'd the thunder, and serenes the sky,
Extinguish'd feel that spark the tempest waked,
That sense of powers exceeding far his own,
Ere yet his feeble heart has lost its fears ?

Cheer'd by the milder beam, the sprightly youth
Speeds to the well-known pool, whose crystal depth
A sandy bottom shows. A while he stands
Gazing th' inverted landscape, half afraid
To meditate the blue profound below ; ✓
Then plunges headlong down the circling flood.
His ebon tresses and his rosy cheek

1235-42. Hazlitt has well remarked of Thomson, that he always gives a *moral sense* to nature. His reflections are often, as here, of a highly practical and useful character.

1246. *Gazing*: Gazing at, &c.

Instant emerge ; and, through th' obedient wave, 1250
 At each short breathing by his lip repell'd,
 With arms and legs according well, he makes,
 As humor leads, an easy-winding path ;
 While, from his polish'd sides, a dewy light
 Effuses on the pleased spectators round. 1255

This is the purest exercise of health,
 The kind refresher of the Summer heats ;
 Nor when cold Winter keens the brightening flood,
 Would I weak shivering linger on the brink.

Thus life redoubles, and is oft preserved, 1260
 By the bold swimmer, in the swift elapse
 Of accident disastrous. Hence the limbs
 Knit into force ; and the same Roman arm,
 That rose victorious o'er the conquer'd earth,
 First learn'd, while tender, to subdue the wave. 1265
 E'en from the body's purity, the mind
 Receives a secret sympathetic aid.

DAMON AND MUSIDORA.

Close in the covert of a hazel copse,
 Where winding into pleasing solitudes
 Runs out the rambling dale, young Damon sat, 1270
 Pensive, and pierced with love's delightful pangs.
 There, to the stream that down the distant rocks
 Hoarse murmuring fell, and plaintive breeze that play'd
 Among the bending willows, falsely he
 Of Musidora's cruelty complain'd. 1275
 She felt his flame ; but deep within her breast
 In bashful coyness, or in maiden pride,
 The soft return conceal'd ; save when it stole

1263. *Roman arm* : Probably that of Julius Cæsar, whose swimming across the Tiber Shakespeare describes.

- In sidelong glances from her downcast eye,
Or from her swelling soul in stifled sighs. 1280
- Touch'd by the scene, no stranger to his vows,
He framed a melting lay, to try her heart;
And, if an infant passion struggled there,
To call that passion forth. Thrice happy swain !
- A lucky chance, that oft decides the fate
Of mighty monarchs, then decided thine.
For lo ! conducted by the laughing Loves,
This cool retreat his Musidora sought.
- Warm in her cheek the sultry season glow'd ;
And, robed in loose array, she came to bathe 1290
Her fervent limbs in the refreshing stream.
What shall he do ? In sweet confusion lost,
And dubious flutterings, he a while remain'd.
- A pure ingenuous elegance of soul,
A delicate refinement, known to few, 1295
Perplex'd his breast, and urged him to retire ;
But love forbade. Ye prudes in virtue, say,
Say, ye severest, what would you have done ?
Meantime, this fairer nymph than ever bless'd
Arcadian stream, with timid eye around 1300

1288, &c. *Musidora*, &c. : Some remarks of Chambers may here interest the reader :—Though born a poet, Thomson seems to have advanced but slowly, and by reiterated efforts, to refinement of taste. The natural fervor of the man overpowered the rules of the scholar. The first edition of the "Seasons" differs materially from the second, and the second still more from the third. Every alteration was an improvement in delicacy of thought and language, of which we may mention one instance. In the scene between Damon and Musidora—"the solemnly-ridiculous bathing," as Campbell had justly termed it—the poet had originally introduced three damsels. Some corrections in the language also were made, by which greater propriety has been secured. *

1300. *Arcadian stream* : Arcadia, in Peloponnesus, was the Alpine region of Greece, and the source of many rivers and lesser streams. It was wild, romantic, and in some parts fertile—just the region for fair *Nymphs* and other similar deities of the imaginative Greeks.

The banks surveying, stripp'd her beauteous limbs,
To taste the lucid coolness of the flood.

Ah then ! not Paris on the piny top

Of Ida panted stronger, when aside

The rival goddesses the veil divine

1305

Cast unconfined, and gave him all their charms,

Than, Damon, thou ; as from the snowy leg,

And slender foot, th' inverted silk she drew ;

As the soft touch dissolved the virgin zone ;

And, through the parting robe, th' alternate breast, 1310

With youth wild throbbing, on the lawless gaze

In full luxuriance rose. But, desperate youth,

How durst thou risk the soul-distracting view ;

As from her naked limbs of glowing white,

Harmonious swell'd by Nature's finest hand,

1315

In folds loose floating fell the fainter lawn ;

And fair exposed she stood, shrunk from herself,

With fancy blushing, at the doubtful breeze

Alarm'd, and starting like the fearful fawn ?

Then to the flood she rush'd ; the parted flood

1320

Its lovely guest with closing waves received ;

And every beauty softening, every grace

Flushing anew, a mellow lustre shed :

As shines the lily through the crystal mild ;

Or as the rose amid the morning dew,

1325

Fresh from Aurora's hand, more sweetly glows.

1303. *Paris*, son of Priam king of ancient Troy. The classical fable, so far as alluded to, is briefly this, as given by Anthon :—Juno, Minerva, and Venus, each laying claim to be more beautiful than the rest, and Jove being unwilling to decide, the god commanded Mercury to lead the three deities to Mount Ida, (near Troy), and to intrust the decision of the affair to the shepherd ~~Alexander~~ (another name for Paris), whose judgment was to be definitive. The goddesses appeared before him, and urged their respective claims, and each, to influence his decision, made him an alluring offer of future advantage.

1326. *Aurora's hand*: Another beautiful fiction of Grecian poets, rep-

While thus she wanton'd, now beneath the wave
 But ill conceal'd ; and now with streaming locks,
 That half embraced her in a humid veil,

Rising again, the latent Damon drew

1330

Such maddening draughts of beauty to the soul,
 As for a while o'erwhelm'd his raptured thought
 With luxury too daring. Check'd, at last,

By love's respectful modesty, he deem'd

The theft profane, if aught profane to love

1335

Can e'er be deem'd ; and, struggling from the shade,
 With headlong hurry fled : but first these lines,

Traced by his ready pencil, on the bank

With trembling hand he threw :—" Bathe on, my fair,

Yet unbeheld save by the sacred eye

1340

Of faithful love : I go to guard thy haunt,

To keep from thy recess each vagrant foot,

And each licentious eye." With wild surprise,

As if to marble struck, devoid of sense,

A stupid moment motionless she stood ;

1345

So stands the statue that enchant's the world !

resenting the goddess of the morning dawn. "Homer describes her as wearing a flowing veil, which she throws back to denote the dispersion of night, and as opening with her rosy fingers the gates of day. Others represent her as a Nymph crowned with flowers, with a star above her head, standing in a chariot drawn by winged horses, while in one hand she holds a torch, and with the other scatters roses, as illustrative of the flowers springing from the dew, which the poets describe as diffused from the eyes of the goddess in liquid pearls."—ANTHON.

1346. *The statue, &c.*: That of Venus de Medicis at Florence. The Royal Gallery at Florence (says Dr. Wilbur Fisk) is a collection of statuary, ancient and modern, made by the successive sovereigns of Tuscany, and especially by the Medici family. The princes of this family, who appear to owe their first elevation to wealth accumulated in the commerce of the Levant, applied a portion of their vast means to the encouragement of the arts and of literature, and to the collection of the most rare specimens of the ancient artists that had survived the wreck of the northern barbarians. Here among other ancient statues is the famous *Venus of Medici*, that *chef d'œuvre* of art, the *beau ideal* of beauty, the wonder

- So bending tries to veil the matchless boast,
 The mingled beauties of exulting Greece.
 Recovering, swift she flew to find those robes
 Which blissful Eden knew not ; and, array'd 1350
 In careless haste, th' alarming paper snatch'd.
 But, when her Damon's well-known hand she saw,
 Her terrors vanish'd, and a softer train
 Of mix'd emotions, hard to be described,
 Her sudden bosom seized : shame void of guilt, 1355
 The charming blush of innocence, esteem,
 And admiration of her lover's flame,
 By modesty exalted. E'en a sense
 Of self-approving beauty stole across
 Her busy thought. At length, a tender calm 1360
 Hush'd by degrees the tumult of her soul ;
 And on the spreading beech, that o'er the stream
 Incumbent hung, she with a sylvan pen
 Of rural lovers, this confession carved,
 Which soon her Damon kiss'd with weeping joy : 1365
 " Dear youth ! sole judge of what these verses mean,
 By fortune too much favor'd, but by love,
 Alas ! not favor'd less, be still as now
 Discreet ; the time may come you need not fly." ↓

of the world. This statue was found in Adrian's villa at Rome, and is very generally attributed to Praxiteles, the Greek artist, and, if correctly, it has been in being between twenty-one and twenty-two hundred years, as Praxiteles flourished more than three hundred years before the Christian era !

Another Venus has risen up at Florence in modern days, from the chisel of Canova, which, in the opinion of some, rivals the antique. It evidently has the advantage of the other in that she has a drapery thrown around her, which, instead of concealing, rather heightens her charms ; and also that she has, in the judgment of many, a better head and a nobler countenance ; but the limbs and general form are in other respects inferior. But to be only inferior to the former is great merit ; and to be superior in any respect is more meritorious still.

THE SOFT HOUR FOR WALKING.

- The sun has lost his rage : his downward orb 1370
 Shoots nothing now but animating warmth,
 And vital lustre ; that, with various ray,
 Lights up the clouds, those beauteous robes of heaven,
 Incessant roll'd into romantic shapes,
 ✓ The dream of waking fancy ! Broad below, 1375
 Cover'd with ripening fruits, and swelling fast
 Into the perfect year, the pregnant earth
 And all her tribes rejoice. Now the soft hour
 Of walking comes, for him, who lonely loves
 To seek the distant hills, and there converse 1380
 With Nature ; there to harmonize his heart,
 And in pathetic song to breathe around
 The harmony to others. Social friends,
 Attuned to happy unison of soul,
 To whose exalting eye a fairer world, 1385
 Of which the vulgar never had a glimpse,
 Displays its charms ; whose minds are richly fraught
 With philosophic stores, superior light ;
 And in whose breast, enthusiastic, burns
 Virtue, the sons of int'rest deem romance, — 1390
 Now call'd abroad, enjoy the falling day :
 Now to the verdant Portico of woods,

1392-3. *Portico* : There seems to be a reference here to the porch of Zeno at Athens, in which he delivered his philosophical lectures. His followers were hence called *Stoics*, or *men of the porch*. It was a public portico, adorned with paintings of the best Grecian masters. The *Lyceum* was an inclosure, sacred to Apollo, near Athens, on the right bank of the Ilissus, just beyond the city proper. It was adorned by Pisistratus, Pericles, and Lycurgus, with fountains, buildings, and plantations, and thus became a favorite place of exercise for the Athenian youths that were preparing for military service. It was also a common resort for philosophers and students. Aristotle and his successors gave instruction there while walking about, and were hence denominated *Peripatetics*. Some suppose, however, that this name was derived from

To Nature's vast Lyceum, forth they walk ;
 By that kind school where no proud master reigns,
The full, free converse of the friendly heart,

1395

Improving and improved. Now from the world,
 Sacred to sweet retirement, lovers steal,
 And pour their souls in transport, which the Sire
 Of love approving hears, and calls it good.

Which way, Amanda, shall we bend our course ? 1400

The choice perplexes. Wherefore should we choose ?
 All is the same with thee. Say, shall we wind
 Along the streams ? or walk the smiling mead ?
 Or court the forest glades ? or wander wild

Among the waving harvest ? or ascend,
 While radiant Summer opens all its pride,

Thy hill, delightful Shene ? Here let us sweep
 The boundless landscape : now the raptured eye,
 Exulting swift, to huge Augusta send ;

Now to the Sister-hills that skirt her plain,
 To lofty Harrow now, and now to where 1410

the *public walk* in the Lyceum, where Aristotle and his disciples were accustomed to meet for purposes of instruction. Thomson, in the next line, refers to Aristotle as a "proud master." He was the teacher of Alexander the Great, and by his able writings on various subjects exerted, for nearly two thousand years, a prodigious and unrivalled influence over the human mind, in literature, science, and religion. He was the father of the scholastic philosophy of the middle ages, which Bacon and Descartes had the honor of overthrowing.

1400. *Amanda* : The lady to whom Thomson was ardently attached—Miss Young, of whom an account is given in note 480, "Spring."

1407. *Shene* : The old name of *Richmond*, signifying, in Saxon, Shining, or Splendor. It is a village nine miles from London, celebrated for its beautiful royal gardens, an observatory, and park. Here was a palace in which died Edward III., Henry VII., and Queen Elizabeth.

1409. *Huge Augusta* : The huge city of London, whose Latin name was *Augusta*.

1410. *Sister-hills* : Highgate and Hampstead.

1411. *Harrow* : Harrow is situated ten miles N. W. of London, on one of the highest hills in the country. This village commands a fine prospect of London.

Majestic Windsor lifts his princely brow.
 In lovely contrast to this glorious view
 Calmly magnificent, then will we turn
 To where the silver Thames first rural grows. 1415
 There let the feasted eye unwearied stray ;
 Luxurious, there, rove through the pendent woods, 1416
 That nodding hang o'er Harrington's retreat ;
 And, stooping thence to Ham's embowering walks,
 Beneath whose shades, in spotless peace retired, 1420
 With her, the pleasing partner of his heart,
 The worthy Queensberry yet laments his Gay, ✓

1412. *Windsor* : This town is twenty-two miles west of London, seated on an eminence on the bank of the Thames. "The picturesque beauty of its scenery, its noble forest, and the interesting historical associations connected with the vicinity, all combine to confer upon it peculiar attractions: but it owes its chief celebrity to its magnificent castle, the favorite residence of a long line of kings. This castle stands upon a high hill, which rises from the town by a gentle ascent; and its fine terrace, faced with a rampart of free-stone, 1870 feet in length, is one of the noblest walks in Europe, with respect to strength, grandeur, and prospects. It was built originally by William the Conqueror, and enlarged by Henry I. Great additions have been made to it by subsequent monarchs. From that part of the castle called the Round Tower, the eye embraces one of the most noble and extensive prospects in England; for not fewer than twelve counties may be discerned with the naked eye; while the landscape presents every combination of picturesque beauty."

—BROOKE.

1418. *Harrington* : The Earl of Harrington, appointed Secretary of State in 1742.

1422. The Duke of *Queensberry* took *Gay*, the humorous poet and dramatist, into his house, and gave him a home during the latter part of his life. He also, with the Duchess, "the pleasing partner of his heart," erected a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey. *Gay* was born in 1688, and died in 1732. He was a popular, but immoral writer—a companion of *Swift*, and of *Pope*. The latter characterized him as

Of manners gentle, of affections mild ;
 In wit a man, simplicity a child.

The epitaph in Westminster Abbey, written for and by himself, consists of the following lines :

Life is a jest, and all things show it ;
 I thought so once, and now I know it.

And polish'd Cornbury woos the willing Muse.
 Slow let us trace the matchless vale of Thames ;
 Fair winding up to where the Muses haunt
 In Twit'ham's bowers, and for their Pope implore
 The healing God ; to royal Hampton's pile,

1425

"Not so," remarks Dr. Fisk : "by this time he has doubtless discovered that life is a momentous reality ; short, it is true, but pregnant with future and eternal consequences ! What an imposition upon the living, and what an insult to the dead, is such an epitaph!"

1423. *Cornbury* : Probably one of the sons of Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon.

1426. *Twit'ham's bowers* : The village of Twickenham, on the Thames, not far from London, was selected by *Alexander Pope* as his residence, and there, in a beautiful villa, he passed some twenty years of the latter part of his life. The taste with which Pope laid out the grounds he had leased (five acres in all) produced, it is said, a decided effect upon English landscape gardening. Previously the stiff, formal Dutch style had prevailed, but he was greatly instrumental in bringing it into disrepute. This distinguished poet and satirist, author of the "Essay on Man," was born in 1688, and died in 1744. His villa was the frequent resort of great statesmen, poets, wits, and female beauties, attracted thither by his wit, his fancy, good sense, exquisite taste, and other accomplishments. He had a feeble constitution, and was subjected at last to a long illness, to which reference is made by Thomson.

It is the more natural in Thomson to refer to Pope, as, like himself, Pope was an intimate friend of Lord Lyttleton, and a visitor at Hagley Park and Hall. Hugh Miller informs us that he observed there a beautiful spot "which had been as favorite a retreat of Pope as two others of Thomson and Shenstone, and in which an elaborately carved urn and pedestal records Lyttleton's estimate of his powers as a writer, and his views as a moralist : 'the sweetest and most elegant,' says the inscription, 'of English poets ; the severest chastiser of vice, and the most persuasive teacher of wisdom.' The little crooked man, during the last thirteen years of his life, was a frequent visitor at Hagley ; and it is still (1845) a tradition in the neighborhood, that in the hollow in which his urn has been erected he particularly delighted. He forgot Cibber, *Sporus*, and Lord *Fanny* ; flung up with much glee his poor shapeless legs, thickened by three pairs of stockings apiece, and far from thick, after all ; and called the place 'his own ground.' It certainly does no discredit to the taste that originated the gorgeous though somewhat indistinct descriptions of 'Windsor Forest.'

1427. *Hampton's pile* : The royal palace at Hampton, on the Thames, thirteen miles S. W. of London. This palace was originally built by Car-



To Clermont's terraced height, and Eshen's ~~gloves~~, ^{of}
Where in the sweetest solitude, embraced
By the soft windings of the silent Mole,
From courts and senates Pelham finds repose.
Enchanting vale ! beyond whate'er the Muse
Has of Achaia or Hesperia sung !
O vale of bliss ! O softly swelling hills !
On which the power of cultivation lies,
And joys to see the wonders of his toil.

1430

1435

COMPLIMENTARY ADDRESS TO BRITAIN.

Heavens ! what a goodly prospect spreads around,
Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires,

dinal Woolsey, and presented by him to Henry VIII.; but was nearly superseded by the present palace, erected by William III. The gardens, parks, and buildings occupy a space four miles in circumference.

1430. *Mole*: A small river in the county of Surrey, and entering the Thames not far from London.

1431. *Pelham*: Sir Henry Pelham, who succeeded Sir Robert Walpole as Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1742.

1433. *Achaia or Hesperia*: *Greece or Italy*, though in a limited sense Achaia was a province of Peloponnesus. The *vale* referred to is that of the Thames.

1437-41. *Goodly prospect, &c.*: Thomson is supposed to be speaking of the prospect from Hagley, concerning which the following remarks of Hugh Miller are worthy of introduction here:—The entire prospect—one of the finest in England, and eminently characteristic of what is best in English scenery—enabled me to understand what I here used to deem a peculiarity—in some measure a defect—in the landscapes of the poet Thomson. It must have often struck the Scotch reader, that in dealing with very extended prospects, he rather enumerates than describes. His pictures are often mere catalogues, in which single words stand for classes of objects, and in which the entire poetry seems to consist in an overwhelming sense of vast extent occupied by amazing multiplicity. I cannot better illustrate my meaning than by his introductory description to the “Panegyric on Great Britain,” 1437-1441.

Now the prospect from the hill at Hagley furnished me with the true explanation of this enumerative style. Measured along the horizon, it must, on the lowest estimate, be at least fifty miles in longitudinal ex-

And glittering towns, and gilded streams, till all
The stretching landscape into smoke decays !

1440

Happy Britannia ! where the queen of arts,
Inspiring vigor, Liberty, abroad
Walks, unconfined, e'en to thy farthest cots,
And scatters plenty with unsparing hand.

Rich is thy soil, and merciful thy clime ;

1445

Thy streams unfailing in the Summer's drought ;

(Unmatch'd thy guardian oaks ; thy valleys float
With golden waves ; and on thy mountains, flocks
Bleat numberless ! while, roving round the sides,
Bellow the blackening herds in lusty droves.

1450

Beneath, thy meadows glow, and rise unquell'd
Against the mower's scythe. On every hand,
Thy villas shine. Thy country teems with wealth ;
And property assures it to the swain,

Pleased and unwearied, in his guarded toil.

1455

Full are thy cities with the sons of art ;
And trade and joy, in every busy street,
Mingling are heard. E'en Drudgery himself,
As at the car he sweats, or dusky hews

tent ; measured laterally, from the spectator forwards, at least twenty. Some of the Welsh mountains which it includes are nearly thrice that distance ; but then they are mere remote peaks, and the area at their bases not included in the prospect. The real area, however, must rather exceed than fall short of a thousand square miles : the fields into which it is laid out are small, scarcely averaging a square furlong in superficies ; so that each square mile must contain about forty, and the entire landscape—for all is fertility—about forty thousand. With these there are commixed innumerable cottages, manor-houses, villages, towns. Here the surface is dimpled by unreckoned hollows ; there fretted by uncounted mounds : all is amazing, overpowering multiplicity—a multiplicity which neither the pen nor the pencil can adequately express ; and so description, in even the hands of a master, sinks into mere enumeration. The picture becomes a catalogue ; and all that genius can accomplish in the circumstances is just to do with its catalogue what Homer did with his—dip it in poetry.

1441. *Queen of arts* : Liberty, in the next line.

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- The palace stone, looks gay. Thy crowded ports, 1460
 Where rising masts an endless prospect yield,
 With labor burn, and echo to the shouts
 Of hurried sailor, as he hearty waves
 His last adieu, and, loosening every sheet,
 Resigns the spreading vessel to the wind. 1465
- Bold, firm, and graceful are thy generous youth,
 By hardship sinew'd, and by danger fired,
 Scattering the nations where they go ; and first,
 Or on the listed plain, or stormy seas.
- Mild are thy glories, too, as o'er the plans 1470
 Of thriving peace thy thoughtful sires preside ;
 In genius and substantial learning high ;
 For every virtue, every worth, renown'd ;
 Sincere, plain-hearted, hospitable, kind ;
 Yet, like the muttering thunder, when provoked, 1475
 The dread of tyrants, and the sole resource
 Of those that under grim oppression groan.

BRITAIN'S DISTINGUISHED SONS.

Thy SONS OF GLORY many ! Alfred thine,
 In whom the splendor of heroic war,

1478. *Thy Sons of Glory*: The long paragraph here commencing may be regarded as a splendid Portrait Gallery, displaying to great advantage the taste, and genius, and historical information of the poet. It is worthy of close study and attention. The notes upon this paragraph are intended to throw a stronger light upon the canvas, so that the subjects may be better understood, and be contemplated with greater interest and profit.

1478. *Alfred*, son of Ethelwolf, ascended the Anglo-Saxon throne of England at twenty years of age, was obliged to maintain it by prodigies of valor against several hostile incursions of the Danes. Having conquered these, he persuaded the remainder of the Danish army to embrace Christianity, and gave them liberty to occupy Northumberland and East Anglia. He was a prince of great wisdom as well as valor. He established civil and military institutions, formed the minds of his rude peo-

And more heroic peace, when govern'd well, 1480
 Combine ; whose hallow'd name the virtues saint,
 And his own Muses love ; the best of kings !

ple to industry and justice. He is regarded as the creator of the English navy, as well as the establisher of the monarchy, and in various ways provided, in troublous times, for the security of his kingdom. He was, moreover, the father of English law and English literature. He framed a body of laws which, though now lost, served long as the basis of English jurisprudence, and was the origin of the English Common Law. Though rigorous in the administration of justice, he entertained a profound regard for the liberty and general welfare of his subjects. In his will he introduced this remarkable declaration—"It is just that the English should ever remain free as their own thoughts."

He gave great encouragement to learning. He invited to England some of the most celebrated scholars from all parts of Europe : everywhere he established schools for the education of the ignorant ; he founded, or greatly improved, the University of Oxford, and endowed it with many privileges and immunities ; he enjoined by law all freeholders, possessed of a specified amount of land, to send their children to school ; and he gave preferment, either in Church or State, to such only as had made some proficiency in science.

He was a writer himself. He prepared and circulated a number of poems, fables, and tales, to lead the ignorant to the pursuit of knowledge. He translated from the Greek the Fables of *Aesop* ; and furnished Saxon translations of the histories of Orosius and Bede, and of the Constitution of Philosophy by Boethius. He turned his attention also to the encouragement of the mechanical arts, granting liberal rewards to inventors and improvers of useful and ingenious arts. He improved the architecture of the kingdom, and devoted himself to the extension of commerce.

"This extraordinary man, who is justly considered, both by natives and foreigners, as the greatest prince after Charlemagne that Europe saw for several ages, and as one of the wisest and best that ever adorned the annals of any nation, died in the year 901, in the vigor of his age and full strength of his faculties, after a life of fifty-three years, and a glorious reign of twenty-nine years and a half. His merit, both in public and private life, may be set in opposition to that of any sovereign or citizen in ancient or modern times. He seems, indeed, as an elegant and profound historian (Hume) has observed, to be the complete model of that perfect character which, under the denomination of a sage, or truly wise man, philosophers have been so fond of delineating, without the hopes of ever seeing it realized."—Russell's Modern Europe, vol. i., 77-82,

With him thy Edwards and thy Henries shine,
 Names dear to fame ; the first, who deep impress'd
 On haughty Gaul the terror of thy arms, 1485
 That awes her genius still. In statesmen thou,
 And patriots, fertile. Thine a steady More,
 Who, with a generous though mistaken zeal,
 Withstood a brutal tyrant's useful rage,
 Like Cato firm, like Aristides just, 1490
 Like rigid Cincinnatus nobly poor ;

1483. There were three *Edwards* of the Saxon line, five of the Plantagenet, and one of the Tudor. There were eight *Henries*, belonging to three different lines of kings.

1485. *Gaul* : France. Edward III. was the first, and the principal of the Edwards in the invasion of France.

1487. *More* : Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England under Henry VIII. Thomson refers to his opposition, as an adherent of the Pope, to the claims of that imperious monarch to be acknowledged as the only supreme Head of the Church of England upon earth. For refusing to acknowledge the king's ecclesiastical supremacy, More was condemned to die on the scaffold, and met his sentence with great fortitude, in 1535. He opposed Henry, also, in regard to the divorce of Queen Catharine. He is represented as a man of great learning, integrity, and capacity.

1490. We noticed *Cato* in 954, one of whose most conspicuous characteristics was firmness ; as those of *Aristides* were justice and integrity. Notwithstanding his brilliant public services, through the intrigues of the jealous Themistocles, a decree of banishment from Greece was procured from the inconstant people. While they were writing upon shells their votes to this effect, an illiterate Athenian, not acquainted with Aristides, requested the latter to write upon his shell the name of Aristides. Being asked what harm Aristides had done him, he replied : He has done me no harm ; but I am tired of hearing him called the Just. Aristides, on being recalled, was intrusted with the management of the public revenues, and though he had an opportunity of enriching himself, was nevertheless so just and honest, that he died in absolute poverty, not leaving enough to pay his funeral expenses, or to furnish marriage gifts to his two daughters. An anecdote which reflects great lustre on his character as an upright judge, may be added. The accuser, with a view to prejudice him against the defendant, was proceeding to tell what injuries the defendant had done to Aristides ; but was prevented by the impartial judge, who exclaimed—" Tell me of the wrongs which he has done to you ; for I sit here to administer justice to you, not to myself."

1491. L. Quintius *Cincinnatus*, a Roman patrician farmer, who was

A dauntless soul erect, who smiled on death.
 Frugal and wise, a Walsingham is thine ;
 A Drake, who made thee mistress of the deep,
 And bore thy name in thunder round the world. 1495
 Then flamed thy spirit high : but who can speak
 The numerous worthies of the Maiden Reign ?
 In Raleigh mark their every glory mix'd ;
 Raleigh, the scourge of Spain ! whose breast with all ,

twice honored with the supreme office of Dictator at Rome, returning in each case to the humble pursuit of agriculture, to his chosen work of ploughing his own fields.

1493. *Walsingham* : Sir Francis Walsingham, Secretary of State under Elizabeth—an able statesman and firm Protestant. He displayed great penetration and address in making discovery of foreign intrigues against the queen's government. He acquired honor as an ambassador, and yet died so poor, in his ninetieth year, that he was privately buried by night in St. Paul's Church, without any funeral ceremony.

1494. *Drake* : Sir Francis Drake, an eminent English navigator and naval hero, who, as such, in the reign of Elizabeth, rendered to his country signal service. He died in 1598.

1498. *Raleigh* : Sir Walter Raleigh, another ornament of the "Maiden Reign"—the reign of Elizabeth—born in 1552. In 1578 he engaged in an expedition the purpose of which was to discover and colonize some part of North America. He did not succeed—and yet in 1583 he sailed for Newfoundland, and with no better results ; but subsequently he discovered Wigandacoa, which, in honor of his virgin queen, was called Virginia, and in two successive voyages established colonies there. He has the honor, or the dishonor, of first introducing tobacco into England, and rendering it an article of commerce. He had an important agency in destroying the famous Spanish Armada, in 1588. On the death of the queen and the accession of James, he was condemned for high treason, on altogether inadequate grounds. He was reprieved, however, and confined for many years in the Tower at London, when he devoted himself to the preparation of his History of the World, the first volume of which appeared in 1614. Two years after this he was released, and served his country in an expedition to explore the gold mines of Guiana ; but unjust complaints of his proceedings there being reported by the Spanish ambassador to James, that weak and arbitrary monarch ordered him to be seized, and to be beheaded on his former accusation, in October, 1618. He was worthy of a better fate than to satiate the vengeance of the Spanish, who were indignant at the success of his arms. The reign of James is justly denominated "a coward reign." Thomson has pre-

- The sage, the patriot, and the hero burn'd. 1500
 Nor sunk his vigor, when a coward reign
 The warrior fetter'd, and at last resign'd,
 To glut the vengeance of a vanquish'd foe. --
 Then, active still and unrestrain'd, his mind
 Explored the vast extent of ages past, 1505
 And with his prison-hours enrich'd the world ;
 Yet found no times, in all the long research,
 So glorious or so base, as those he proved,
 In which he conquer'd, and in which he bled.
 Nor can the Muse the gallant Sidney pass, 1510

sented an accurate and skilful portrait of this energetic and accomplished man.

1510 *Sidney*: Sir Philip Sidney, an able statesman in the reign of Elizabeth, by whom he was much honored. He was a brave warrior, and died in 1587 of a wound which he received in the battle of Zutphen, on the banks of the Issel, in Guelderland. He is the author of a celebrated romance entitled *Arcadia*, and of a *Defence of Poetry*, also of several poems. "His bravery and chivalrous magnanimity; his grace and polish of manner; the purity of his morals; his learning and refinement of taste, had procured for him love and esteem wherever he was known. By the direction of Elizabeth his remains were conveyed to London, and honored with a public funeral in the cathedral of St. Paul's."

An old writer thus eulogizes his varied merit:—"Gentle Sir Philip Sidney, thou knewest what belonged to a scholar: thou knewest what pains, what toil, what travel, conduct to perfection; well couldst thou give every virtue his encouragement, every art his due, every writer his desert, 'cause none more virtuous, witty, or learned than thyself."

Another describes his whole life as "poetry put into action." The *North American Review* (1832) contains an interesting article, in which it is stated that, when Sidney was retiring from the field of battle fatally wounded, an incident occurred, which well illustrates his chivalrous spirit and that goodness of heart which gained him the appellation of the "*Gentle Sir Philip Sidney*," the circumstance having been made the subject of an historical painting by West. It is thus related by Lord Brooke:

The horse he rode upon was rather furiously choleric than bravely proud, and so forced him to forsake the field but not his back, as the noblest and fittest bier to carry a martial commander to his grave. In which sad progress, passing along by the rest of the army where his uncle the General was, and being thirsty with excess of bleeding, he called for drink, which was presently brought him; but as he was putting the bot-

- The plume of war ! with early laurels crown'd,
 The lover's myrtle, and the poet's bay.
 A Hampden too is thine, illustrious land,
 Wise, strenuous, firm, of unsubmitting soul,
 Who stemm'd the torrent of a downward age, 1515
 To slavery prone, and bade thee rise again,
 In all thy native pomp of freedom bold.
 Bright, at his call, thy age of men effulged,
 Of men on whom late time a kindling eye
 Shall turn, and tyrants tremble while they read. 1520
 Bring every sweetest flower, and let me strew

tle to his mouth, he saw a poor soldier carried along, who had eaten his last at the same feast, ghastly casting up his eyes at the bottle ; which Sir Philip perceiving, took it from his head before he drank, and delivered it to the poor man with these words, "Thy necessity is yet greater than mine."

1513. *Hampden* : John Hampden, the distinguished patriot, who opposed the arbitrary taxation of Charles I., and became the leader of the popular party in the House of Commons against the king. When the civil wars commenced, he took the field, and after a valorous career was cut down when engaged in battle against Prince Rupert, June, 1643.

His history (says Macaulay), more particularly from the beginning of the year 1640 to his death, is the history of England. A great and terrible crisis had then come. A direct attack was made by an arbitrary government on a sacred right of Englishmen, on a right which was a chief security for all their other rights. The nation looked round for a defender. Calmly and unostentatiously the plain Buckinghamshire Esquire placed himself at the head of his countrymen, and right before the face and across the path of tyranny. The times grew darker and more troubled. Public service, perilous, arduous, delicate, was required ; and to every service the intellect and the courage of this wonderful man were found fully equal. He became a debater of the first order, a most dexterous manager of the House of Commons, a negotiator, a soldier. He governed a fierce and turbulent assembly, abounding in able men, as easily as he had governed his family. He showed himself as competent to direct a campaign as to conduct the business of the petty sessions. We can scarcely express the admiration which we feel for a mind so great, and, at the same time, so healthful and so well proportioned ; so willingly contracting itself to the humblest duties ; so easily expanding itself to the highest ; so contented in repose ; so powerful in action.

The grave where Russel lies ; whose temper'd blood,
 With calmest cheerfulness for thee resign'd,
 Stain'd the sad annals of a giddy reign,
 Aiming at lawless power, though meanly sunk 1525
 In loose, inglorious luxury. With him
 His friend, the British Cassius, fearless bled ;
 Of high determined spirit, roughly brave,
 By ancient learning to th' enlighten'd love
 Of ancient freedom warm'd. Fair thy renown 1530
 In awful sages and in noble bards ;
 Soon as the light of dawning science spread
 Her orient ray, and waked the Muses' song.
 Thine is a Bacon ; hapless in his choice,

1522. *Russell* : Lord William Russell, who had a seat in the House of Commons under Charles II., opposed the succession of the Duke of York to the throne, and was charged with treasonable conduct as an associate of the Duke of Monmouth, and beheaded in 1683. The "giddy reign" of Charles II. is well described by Thomson.

1527. *British Cassius* : It is supposed that under this title is intended *Algernon Sidney*. In the civil war he espoused the side of the Parliament against Charles I., and was colonel in the army. Making the Roman Brutus his model, and being in favor of a pure democracy, he opposed the course of Cromwell. Being absent from England at the restoration of Charles II., he was promised a pardon on his return. By the infamous Judge Jeffreys he was tried on the charge of being implicated in the Rye-house plot, and found guilty, and though he complained to the king of an unfair trial, was beheaded Dec. 7, 1683. He was an able writer, a man of high spirit, and of strong republican tendencies. His Discourses on Government possess great merit. From his daring spirit, connected with his opposition to tyranny and usurpation, our author styles him the British Cassius—Cassius having been the impetuous foe of Julius Cæsar in the latter part of his ambitious career.

1534. *Bacon* : Sir Francis Bacon, who under Elizabeth and James arose from one post of distinction to another until he was appointed Lord Chancellor. As a philosopher he has rendered himself immortal by marking out in his *Novum Organum* the true method of scientific research, and by exploding those that had been pursued in previous ages. As a man, a courtier, and a politician, he rendered himself despicable by his slavish obsequiousness to the sovereign, and by his confessed guilt in the matter of gross bribery and corruption as a judge. The sentence to an enormous

Unfit to stand the civil storm of state,
 And through the smooth barbarity of courts,
 With firm but pliant virtue, forward still
 To urge his course. Him for the studious shade
 Kind Nature form'd, deep, comprehensive, clear,
 Exact, and elegant ; in one rich soul,) *Augustan* 1540
 Plato, the Stagyrite, and Tully join'd.)

~~and~~, and indefinite imprisonment, was, however, subsequently remitted, and he passed the remainder of his days in scientific pursuits—his life closing in 1626. He is regarded as the father of experimental science. As has been observed by Chambers, “he turned the attention of philosophers from speculations and disputes upon questions remote from use, and fixed it upon inquiries ‘productive of works for the benefit of the life of man.’ The Aristotelian philosophy was barren : the object of Bacon was ‘the amplification of the power and kingdom of mankind over the world’—‘the enlargement of the bounds of human empire to the effecting all things possible’—the augmentation, by means of science, of the sum of human happiness, and the alleviation of human suffering. Bacon, like Sidney, was a ‘warbler of poetic prose.’ No English writer has surpassed him in fervor and brilliancy of style, in force of expression, or in richness and significance of imagery. He has treated of philosophy with all the splendor, yet none of the vagueness of poetry.” The best account of his life and philosophy, perhaps, is to be found in Macaulay’s *Miscellanies*, to which I refer, instead of lengthening this note by quotations.

1541. *Plato, the Stagyrite, and Tully join’d* : In Bacon were united the distinguishing endowments of those great men. Like Plato, he had a soaring genius, a philosophical and poetic spirit : he united a lively fancy to great acuteness of intellect. Cicero says of Plato’s diction, that if Jupiter were to speak in the Greek tongue he would use the language of Plato ; and Aristotle regards it as a species of diction intermediate between verse and prose. He excels also in discussing abstract subjects, being generally clear, simple, and harmonious.

The *Stagyrite*, or Aristotle, who was born at Stagyra, was distinguished for habits of research into all classes of subjects, physical, moral, and intellectual, and for his prodigious acquisitions and learned treatises. More than any previous writer he enlarged the limits of philosophical inquiry. He made Logic the *Organon*, or instrument for obtaining general knowledge, or rather of conducting an argumentation. Intellect in him was the leading faculty. While he entitled his works *Organon*, Bacon denominated his own the *Novum Organum*, or new instrument of Truth.

He resembled *Tully*, or Cicero, in his great powers as an orator and as

The great deliverer he ! who from the gloom
 Of cloister'd monks, and jargon-teaching schools,
 Led forth the true Philosophy, there long
 Held in the magic chain of words and forms, 1545
 And definitions void : he led her forth,
 Daughter of Heaven ! that, slow ascending still,
Investigating sure the chain of things,
 With radiant finger points to heaven again.

✓ The generous Ashley thine, the friend of man ; 1550
 Who scann'd his nature with a brother's eye,
 His weakness prompt to shade, to raise his aim,
 To touch the finer movements of the mind,
 And with the moral beauty charm the heart.
 * Why need I name thy Boyle, whose pious search, 1555
 Amid the dark recesses of his works,

a pleader, to which, as in the case of Cicero, he was indebted for his rapid advancement to the highest dignities of the state. Like him, also, he lacked firmness and decision ; he was cringing and servile in his adulation of men in power. He chose the interests of the court rather than those of the people "in the civil storm of state," and thus was "hapless in his choice." He was greedy of wealth and of distinction, and mean in his modes of seeking both.

1550 *Ashley* : Robert Ashley was a lawyer and a writer of some distinction, a collector of books on the continent, and a great benefactor of the society to which he belonged. He died in 1641.

It is possible that not the above person, but Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, and author of the "Characteristics," was designated by Thomson. He was a fine scholar, an accomplished gentleman, and an eloquent writer, though tinctured with skeptical opinions. He died in 1713.

1555. *Robert Boyle* stands deservedly high in the annals of British science, philanthropy, and religion. He was distinguished as an experimental philosopher and chemist, invented the air-pump, and was a prominent member of the *Royal Society of London for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge*, incorporated by Charles II. in 1662. Of this society he was in vain urged to accept the presidency. He was an active, zealous Christian, and promoter of Christianity, both by his writings and with his money. His annual charities amounted to about \$5000. His works embrace 5 vols. folio. He died in 1691.

The great Creator sought ? And why thy Locke,
 Who made the whole internal world his own ?
 Let Newton, pure intelligence, whom God
 To mortals lent, to trace his boundless works 1560
 From laws sublimely simple, speak thy fame
 In all philosophy. For lofty sense,
 Creative fancy, and inspection keen,
 Through the deep windings of the human heart,
 Is not wild Shakspeare thine and Nature's boast ? 1565

1557. *John Locke* has a world-wide renown from his great treatise on the Human Understanding, still used as a text book in some of the first institutions of learning. Its composition occupied nine years. He wrote several other treatises, which are highly esteemed. In 1704 he died.

1559. *Sir Isaac Newton*, one of the most illustrious names adorning any country or age ; born in 1642. Mathematics and Astronomy was the field he most cultivated, and with unexampled success. In 1669 he succeeded Dr. Barrow in the mathematical chair at Cambridge, where he delivered lectures on the discoveries he had made in Optics and on his Theory of Light and Color. He was elected President of the Royal Society in 1703, and for twenty-five years held that honorable position—even to his death. The Bible was his daily study ; and upon the prophetic writings he published an excellent commentary. His great scientific treatise he entitled “Philosophia Naturalis Principia Mathematica.” As a man he possessed the most estimable traits, and received during his public life the greatest consideration from Queen Anne, George I., and the men of science and refinement in those reigns.

1565. *William Shakspeare*, the great poet of human nature, and the unrivalled dramatist, born in Stratford-on-Avon in 1564, and lived till 1616. The plots of his dramas were chiefly borrowed from novels and romances, from legendary stories, or from older plays. In preparing those plays in which Roman subjects are prominent, he used North's translation of Plutarch ; while Holinshed's Chronicle furnished him the incidents for his English historical dramas.

Hazlitt draws his portrait with the hand of a master. There is room but for a small part of it. He “had a mind reflecting ages past” and present ; all the people that ever lived are there. There was no respect of persons with him. His genius shone equally on the evil and on the good, on the wise and on the foolish, the monarch and the beggar : “All corners of the earth, kings, queens, and states, maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave,” are hardly hid from his searching glance. He turned the globe round for his amusement, and surveyed the generations of men, and the individuals as they passed, with their different concerns,

Is not each great, each amiable Muse
 Of classic ages in thy Milton met ?
 A genius universal as his theme,
 Astonishing as chaos, as the bloom

passions, follies, vices, virtues, actions, and motives—as well those that they knew, as those which they did not know or acknowledge to themselves. Airy beings united at his call, and came at his bidding. The world of spirits lay open to him, like the world of real men and women ; and there is the same truth in his delineations of the one as of the other ; for if the preternatural characters he describes could be supposed to exist, they would speak and feel and act as he makes them. He had only to think of any thing in order to become that thing, with all the circumstances belonging to it. When he conceived of a character, whether real or imaginary, he not only entered into all its thoughts, but seemed instantly to be surrounded with all the same objects, the same local outward and unforeseen accidents which would occur in reality. The poet may be said, for the time, to identify himself with the character he wishes to represent, and to pass from one to another, like the same soul successively animating different bodies. His plays are properly expressions of the passions, not descriptions of them. Shakspeare's imagination is of the same plastic kind as his conception of character or passion. He has also a magic power over words : they come winged at his bidding ; and seem to know their places. His epithets and single phrases are like sparkles, thrown off from an imagination fired by the whirling rapidity of its own motion. His language in the impassioned parts translates thoughts into visible images. His versification is no less powerful, sweet, and varied. He had an equal genius for tragedy and comedy.

Upon the faults of Shakspeare as an author, it has been observed, that some of his plays are hastily and ill-constructed as to plot ; that his proneness to quibble and play with words is brought forward in scenes where this peculiarity constitutes a positive defect ; that he is sometimes indelicate where indelicacy is least pardonable, and where it jars most painfully with the associations of the scene, and that his style is occasionally stiff, tinged, and obscure, chiefly because it is at once highly figurative and condensed in expression.

1567. *John Milton*, the great classical poet of England, whose immortal poems deserve a place with those of Homer and Virgil, was born in 1608, and died in 1674. He was an elegant Latin scholar, and wrote fluently that language, and was appointed Latin Secretary to the council of state. He was a stanch advocate of republican principles and of Cromwell ; and therefore at the Restoration of the Stuarts he was compelled to conceal himself to escape from political penalties. However, through the intercession of friends, and in view of his great learning and consummate abil-

Of blowing Eden fair, as heaven sublime !
 Nor shall my verse that elder bard forget,
 The gentle Spenser, Fancy's pleasing son,
 Who, like a copious river pour'd his song
 O'er all the mazes of enchanted ground :
 Nor thee, his ancient master, laughing sage,

1570

1575

ties, he was pardoned by Charles II., who also offered to him the foreign or Latin secretaryship, but he declined it for the purpose of devoting himself to the completion of his great Poem—the Paradise Lost, and its sequel—Paradise Regained. His prose writings, which are numerous, display great learning, and uncommon vigor of thought and of style. Of his poetic qualifications it would be difficult to give a more condensed and yet comprehensive account than Thomson has placed before us—the substance of which is, that the poetry of Milton combines the excellencies of the best of the Grecian and Roman bards.

I would add, from Hazlitt, that Milton adorns and dignifies his subject to the utmost: he surrounds it with every possible association of beauty or grandeur, whether moral, intellectual, or physical. He refines on his descriptions of beauty, till the sense aches at them; and raises his images of terror to a gigantic elevation that "makes Osra like a wart." Milton has borrowed more than any other writer, and exhausted every source of imitation, sacred or profane; yet he is perfectly distinct from every other writer. The power of his mind is stamped on every line. His learning has all the effect of intuition. He describes objects, of which he could only have read in books, with the vividness of actual observation. His imagination has the force of nature. He makes words tell as pictures. Milton's blank verse is the only blank verse in the language (except Shakspeare's) that deserves the name of verse.

1572. *Edmund Spenser*: A much admired poet of the reign of Elizabeth: the poet laureate. His death occurred in 1598. The language of his poems is now in a great measure obsolete: they display a lively, inventive, and powerful genius. According to Chambers:—Spenser is the most luxuriant and melodious of all the English descriptive poets. His creation of scenes and objects is infinite, and in free and sonorous versification he has not yet been surpassed. His "lofty rhyme" has a swell and cadence, and a continuous sweetness, that we find nowhere else. In richness of fancy and invention, he can scarcely be ranked below Shakespeare, and he is fully as original. The romantic character of his poetry is its most essential and permanent feature. The Faery Queen is his chief production, and being adapted to the court and times of the virgin Queen, met with a most enthusiastic reception. The Queen in view of it gave him a pension of £50 per annum.

NB
✓

Chaucer, whose native, manners-painting verse,
Well moralized, shines through the Gothic cloud ✓
Of time and language o'er thy genius thrown.

1576. *Geoffrey Chaucer* is denominated by Dryden, the Father of English poetry. He was born in London in 1328, educated at Cambridge and Oxford, and improved by continental travel. Having held under government several lucrative offices, he suffered severe persecution for embracing the tenets of Wickliffe, and then retired from public life—not to be idle, but to cultivate and exercise his poetic talents.

"Chaucer was a man of the world as well as a student: a soldier and courtier, employed in public affairs of delicacy and importance, and equally acquainted with the splendor of the warlike and magnificent reign of Edward III., and with the bitter reverses of fortune which accompanied the subsequent troubles and convulsions. When about sixty, in the calm evening of a busy life, he composed his *Canterbury Tales*, simple and varied as nature herself, imbued with the results of extensive experience and close observation, and colored with the genial lights of a happy temperament, that had looked on the world without austerity, and passed through its changing scenes without losing the freshness and vivacity of youthful feeling and imagination." For a full account of these Tales and of the author, I must refer the reader to Chambers' Cyclopedias, whence this extract is taken.

Hazlitt gives us the following view of Chaucer and Spenser: As Spenser was the most romantic and visionary, Chaucer was the most practical of all the great poets. His poetry reads like history. Every thing has a downright reality; at least in the relator's mind. A simile, or a sentiment, is as if it were given in upon evidence. His poetry resembles the root just springing from the ground rather than the full-blown flower. Chaucer's descriptions of natural scenery have a local truth and freshness, which gives the very feeling of the air, the coolness or moisture of the ground. Spenser, as well as Chaucer, was engaged in active life; but the genius of his poetry was not active: it is inspired by the love of ease and relaxation from all the cares and business of life. Though much later than Chaucer, his obligations to preceding writers were less. If Ariosto transports us into the regions of romance, Spenser's poetry is all fairy-land. In Ariosto we walk upon the ground, in company gay, fantastic, and adventurous enough. In Spenser, we wander in another world, among ideal beings. The poet takes and lays us in the lap of a lovelier nature, by the sound of softer streams, among greener hills and fairer valleys. He is the painter of abstractions, and describes them with dazzling minuteness. His versification is at once the most smooth and the most sounding in the language.

1577. *Gothic cloud of time and language, &c.*: Chaucer wrote at a time

- May my song soften, as thy Daughters I,
Britannia, hail ! for beauty is their own, 1580
The feeling heart, simplicity of life,
And elegance, and taste ; the faultless form,
Shaped by the hand of harmony ; the cheek,
Where the live crimson, through the native white
Soft-shooting, o'er the face diffuses bloom, 1585
And every nameless grace ; the parted lip,
Like the red rosebud moist with morning dew,
Breathing delight ; and, under flowing jet,
Or sunny ringlets, or of circling brown,
The neck slight shaded, and the swelling breast : 1590
The look resistless, piercing to the soul,
And by the soul inform'd, when dress'd in love
She sits high smiling in the conscious eye.
Island of bliss ! amid the subject seas,
That thunder round thy rocky coasts, set up, 1595
At once the wonder, terror, and delight
Of distant nations ; whose remotest shores
Can soon be shaken by thy naval arm ;
Not to be shook thyself, but all assaults
Baffling, as thy hoar cliffs the loud sea-wave.] 1600

THE SAVING VIRTUES OF A COUNTRY.

- O Thou ! by whose Almighty nod the scale
Of empire rises, or alternate falls,
Send forth the saving virtues round the land,
In bright patrol : white peace, and social love ;
The tender-looking charity, intent 1605
On gentle deeds, and shedding tears through smiles ;
Undaunted truth, and dignity of mind ;

and in a language, comparatively barbarous. His diction, compared with the superior cultivation of more recent times, is rude and obscure.

Courage composed and keen; sound temperance,
 Healthful in heart and looks; clear chastity,
 With blushes reddening as she moves along,
 Disorder'd at the deep regard she draws; 1610
 Rough industry; activity untired,
 With copious life inform'd, and all awake:
 While in the radiant front, superior shines
 That first paternal virtue, public zeal,
 Which throws o'er all an equal wide survey,
 And, ever musing on the commonweal,
 Still labors glorious with some great design.

SUNSET.



Low walks the sun, and broadens by degrees,
 Just o'er the verge of day. The shifting clouds 1620
 Assembled gay, a richly gorgeous train,
 In all their pomp attend his setting throne.
 Air, earth, and ocean smile immense. And now,
 As if his weary chariot sought the bowers
 Of Amphitritè and her tending nymphs,
 (So Grecian fable sung), he dips his orb;
 Now half immersed; and now a golden curve
 Gives one bright glance, then total disappears.

Forever running an enchanted round,
 Passes the day, deceitful, vain, and void;
 As fleets the vision o'er the formful brain,
 This moment hurrying wild th' impassion'd soul,
 The next in nothing lost. 'Tis so to him,
 The dreamer of this earth, an idle blank:
 A sight of horror to the cruel wretch,
 Who, all day long, in sordid pleasure roll'd,

1618. *Informed*: Inspired.

1625. *Amphitritè*: The fabled wife of Neptune, god of the ocean.

Himself a useless load, has squander'd vile,
Upon his scoundrel train, what might have cheer'd
A drooping family of modest worth.

But to the generous, still improving mind,
That gives the hopeless heart to sing for joy,
Diffusing kind beneficence around,
Boastless as now descends the silent dew ;
To him the long review of order'd life
Is inward rapture, only to be felt.

1640

1645

SUMMER EVENING.

X very faint

Confess'd from yonder, slow-extinguish'd clouds,
All ether softening, sober evening takes
Her wonted station in the middle air ;
A thousand shadows at her beck. First this
She sends on earth ; then that of deeper dye
Steals soft behind ; and then a deeper still,
In circle following circle, gathers round,
To close the face of things. A fresher gale
Begins to wave the wood, and stir the stream,
Sweeping with shadowy gust the fields of corn ; — 1655
While the quail clamors for his running mate.

1650

Wide o'er the thistly lawn, as swells the breeze,
A whitening shower of vegetable down
Amusive floats. The kind, impartial care
Of Nature naught despairs. Thoughtful to feed 1660
Her lowest sons, and clothe the coming year,
From field to field the feather'd seed she wings.

His folded flock secure, the shepherd home
Hies merry-hearted ; and by turns relieves
The ruddy milkmaid of her brimming pail ;
The beauty, whom perhaps his witless heart,
Unknowing what the joy-mix'd anguish means, |
Sincerely loves, by that best language shown

1660

1665

Google

Of cordial glances and obliging deeds.

Onward they pass o'er many a panting height,

1670

And valley sunk, and unfrequented ; where

At fall of eve the fairy people throng,

In various game, and revelry, to pass

The summer night, as village stories tell.

But far about they wander from the grave

Of him, whom his ungentle fortune urged

Against his own sad breast to lift the hand

Of impious violence. The lonely tower

Is also shunn'd, whose mournful chambers hold,

So night-struck fancy dreams, the yelling ghost.

1675

1680

THE NIGHT-SCENE—METEORS AND COMETS.

Among the crooked lanes, on every hedge,

The glow-worm lights his gem ; and through the dark

1672. *Fairy people*: Fairies are imaginary beings, who occupied a distinguished place in the traditional superstitions of the nations of Western Europe, and especially in the British Islands. The British fairies, although they have something in common with the Dwergas, or Guomes, of the Scandinavian mythology, are not identical with them. They are, in fact, peculiar to people of Celtic race ; but the popular belief was nowhere invested with so poetical a character as in the Lowlands of Scotland, where it forms a main ingredient in the beautiful ballad poetry of the district. The fairies of the Scottish and English mythology are diminutive beings, who render themselves occasionally visible to men, especially in exposed places, on the sides of hills or in the glades of forests, which it is their custom to frequent. They have also dealings with men, but of an uncertain and unreal character. Their presents are sometimes valuable ; but generally accompanied, in that case, with some condition or peculiarity which renders them mischievous : more often they are unsubstantial, and turn into dirt or ashes in the hands of those to whom they have been given. Mortals have occasionally been transported into Fairy-land, and have found that all its apparent splendor was equally delusive. One of the most ordinary employments of fairies, in vulgar superstition, is that of stealing children at nurse, and substituting their own offspring in place of them, which after a short time perish, or are carried away.—BRANDE.

1682. *Glow-worm*: The body of these insects is very soft, and espe-

A moving radiance twinkles. Evening yields
 The world to night ; not in her winter robe
 Of massy Stygian woof, but loose array'd
 In mantle dun. A faint, erroneous ray,
 Glanced from th' imperfect surfaces of things,
 Flings half an image on the straining eye ;
 While wavering woods, and villages, and streams,
 And rocks, and mountain-tops, that long retain'd
 Th' ascending gleam, are all one swimming scene,
 Uncertain if beheld. Sudden to heaven
 Thence weary vision turns ; where, leading soft
 The silent hours of love, with purest ray
 Sweet Venus shines ; and from her genial rise,
 When daylight sickens, till it springs afresh,
 Unrival'd reigns, the fairest lamp of night.
 As thus th' effulgence tremulous I drink,
 With cherish'd gaze, the lambent lightnings shoot.

1685

1690

1695

cially the abdomen ; and it is from the last two or three segments of this part of the body that the phosphorescent light, for which they are so remarkable, is emitted. Its intensity is evidently dependent, in a great degree, upon the state of the animal : if the insect be irritated, it is increased ; but if its powers are depressed or exhausted, it is lessened. In the glow-worm (*Noctiluca*), it is only the female that is luminous ; and she is destitute of wings and elytra, which the male possesses. They are only active by night ; and as the male is known to be attracted, like moths, by lights in houses, it is probable that the phosphorescence of the female is given for the purpose of signalizing her position to him.—
 CHAMBERS.

1685. *Stygian woof*: Dark, gloomy texture, resembling in color the fabled river Styx in Arcadia, whose waters were made black by Ceres.

1699. *Lambent lightnings* : The Northern Lights—Aurora Borealis. The terror awakened by these in the breasts of the superstitious is more fully described in Autumn, 1107–1130. Some (says Dick) pretend to see, in these harmless lights, armies mixing in fierce encounter, and fields streaming with blood ; others behold states overthrown, earthquakes, inundations, pestilences, and the most dreadful calamities. Because some one or other of these calamities formerly happened soon after the appearance of a comet, or the blaze of an aurora, therefore they are considered either as the causes or the prognostics of such events !

Across the sky, or horizontal dart 1700
 In wondrous shapes ; by fearful murmuring crowds ^{beautifl moon}
Portentous deem'd. Amid the radiant orbs,
 That more than deck, that animate the sky,
 The life-infusing suns of other worlds ;
 Lo ! from the dread immensity of space 1705
 Returning, with accelerated course,
 The rushing comet to the sun descends ;
 And, as he sinks below the shading earth,
 With awful train projected o'er the heavens,
 The guilty nations tremble. But, above 1710
 Those superstitious horrors that enslave
 The fond sequacious herd, to mystic faith
 And blind amazement prone, th' enlighten'd few,
 Whose godlike minds Philosophy exalts,
 The glorious stranger hail. They feel a joy 1715
 Divinely great ; they in their powers exult,
 That wondrous force of thought, which mounting spurns
 This dusky spot, and measures all the sky ;
 While, from his far excursion through the wilds

1707-1715. *Rushing comet, &c.*: Nothing in Astronomy (says Prof. Olmsted) is more truly admirable than the knowledge which astronomers acquired of the motions of comets, and the power they have gained of predicting their return. Indeed, every thing appertaining to this class of bodies is so wonderful as to seem rather a tale of romance than a simple recital of facts. Comets are truly the knights-errant of Astronomy. Appearing suddenly in the nocturnal sky, and often dragging after them a train of terrific aspect, they were, in the earlier ages of the world, and indeed until a recent period, considered as peculiarly ominous of the wrath of Heaven, and as harbingers of wars and famines, of the dethronement of monarchs, and the dissolution of empires. Science has, it is true, disarmed them of their terrors, and demonstrated that they are under the guidance of the same Hand that directs in their courses the other members of the solar system ; but she has, at the same time, arrayed them in a garb of majesty peculiarly her own.

1715-1723. The sublime emotions excited upon an intelligent survey of the comet's course and other celestial phenomena are here finely contrasted with the unfounded apprehensions and superstitious horrors of

Of barren ether, faithful to his time,
 They see the blazing wonder rise anew,
 In seeming terror clad, but kindly bent
 To work the will of all-sustaining Love :

1720

"the fond sequacious herd"—the ignorant multitude that eagerly follow the dictation of their superiors, and are prone to a "mystic faith" and "blind amazement."

This point is well illustrated by the following incident, related by Dr. Thomas Dick:—When the splendid comet of 1456 appeared (supposed to be the same as Halley's comet), its tail extended at one time more than sixty degrees. Three days before its perihelion, its nucleus was as bright as a fixed star, its tail of the color of gold, and it appears to have exhibited coruscations. Pope Calixtus, believing it to be at once the sign and instrument of Divine wrath, was so frightened at its appearance that he ordered public prayers to be offered up in every town, and the bells to be tolled at the noon of each day, to warn the people to supplicate the mercy of Heaven. He at the same time excommunicated both the comet and the Turks, whose arms had lately proved victorious against the Christians, and established the custom, which still exists in Catholic countries, of ringing the church bells at noon. In modern times certain natural effects have likewise been attributed to the influence of comets; such as tempests, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, cold or hot seasons, overflowings of rivers, dense clouds of flies or locusta, the plague, the cholera, and other disorders.

The *benevolent purposes* supposed to be accomplished by this class of the heavenly bodies, are merely matters of conjecture, and Thomson presents them in that light. There can be no question (observes the author last quoted) that comets are as intimately connected with a system of benevolence as are the solar radiations, and their benign influence on our globe and on the other planets. It has been conjectured that comets may supply moisture to the other planets, and invigorate the vital principle of our atmosphere; that they may recruit the sun with fresh fuel, and repair the consumption of his light; or that they may be the agents for dispersing the electric fluid through the planetary regions; and although there is little probability that such conjectures are accordant with fact, yet it may be admitted that comets may produce a *physical* influence of a beneficial nature throughout the solar system. But what I conceive to be one of the main designs of the Creator in the formation of such a vast number of splendid bodies, is, that they may serve as habitations for myriads of intellectual beings, to whom the Almighty displays his perfections in a peculiar manner, and on whom he bestows the riches of his beneficence. If this position be admitted, then we ought to contemplate the approach of a comet, not as an object of terror or a harbin-

From his huge vapory train perhaps to shake
 Reviving moisture on the numerous orbs,
 Through which his long ellipsis winds ; perhaps
 To lend new fuel to declining suns,
 To light up worlds, and feed th' eternal fire.

1725

EULOGIUM ON PHILOSOPHY.

With thee, serene Philosophy, with thee,
 And thy bright garland, let me crown my song ! 1730
 → Effusive source of evidence and truth !
 A lustre shedding o'er th' ennobled mind,
 Stronger than summer noon ; and pure as that,
 Whose mild vibrations soothe the parted soul,
 New to the dawning of celestial day. 1735
 Hence through her nourish'd powers, enlarged by thee,
 She springs aloft with elevated pride,
 Above the tangling mass of low desires,
 That bind the fluttering crowd ; and, angel-wing'd,
 The heights of science and of virtue gains 1740
 (Where all is calm and clear); with nature round,
 Or in the starry regions, or th' abyss,

ger of evil, but as a splendid world, of a different construction from ours, conveying millions of happy beings to survey a new region of the Divine empire, and to contemplate new scenes of creating power.

The whole subject of comets—their influence on the earth, their inhabitability, and their probable design—is ingeniously and fully treated in Dick's "Sidereal Heavens."

1735. *New, &c.* : Unaccustomed to the dawning, &c.

1742. *Abyss* : It is not clear in what sense Thomson uses this term. It is evidently placed in contrast with the starry regions, and therefore probably denotes the depths of the earth—all beneath the surface of the ocean or land that admits of investigation and of exploration. In Scripture the term abyss denotes the waters that originally surrounded the earth, when it was "without form and void."

The vast immeasurable abyss,
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild.—MILTON.
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To Reason's and to Fancy's eye display'd :
 The first up tracing, from the dreary void,
 The chain of causes and effects to HIM.
 The world-producing Essence, Who alone
 Possesses being ; while the last receives
 The whole magnificence of heaven and earth,
 And every beauty, delicate or bold,
 Obvious or more remote, with livelier sense,
 Diffusive painted on the rapid mind.

1745

Tutor'd by thee, hence Poetry exalts
 Her voice to ages ; and informs the page
 With music, image, sentiment, and thought,
 Never to die ! the treasure of mankind !
 Their highest honor, and their truest joy !

1750

Without thee, what were unenlighten'd man ?
 A savage roaming through the woods and wilds,
 In quest of prey ; and with the unfashion'd fur
 Rough clad ; devoid of every finer art
 And elegance of life. Nor happiness
 Domestic, mix'd of tenderness and care,
 Nor moral excellence, nor social bliss,

1755

Nor guardian law were his ; nor various skill
 To turn the furrow, or to guide the tool
 Mechanic ; nor the heaven-conducted prow
 Of navigation bold, that fearless braves
 The burning line or dares the wintry pole ;
 Mother severe of infinite delights !
 Nothing, save rapine, indolence, and guile,
 And woes on woes, a still revolving train !
 Whose horrid circle had made human life

1760

1765

1770

744. *The first* : (Reason's eye) tracing from the dreary void, from regions of space where nothing exists, &c.

1747. *While the last* (Fancy's eye), &c.

1768. *The burning line* : The equinoctial, where the sun pours down its vertical and hottest rays.

Than non-existence worse. But taught by thee,

Ours are the plans of policy and peace;

To live like brothers, and, conjunctive all,

1775

Embellish life. While thus laborious crowds

Ply the tough oar, Philosophy directs

The ruling helm ; or like the liberal breath,

Of potent heaven, invisible, the sail

Swells out, and bears th' inferior world along.

1780

Nor to this evanescent speck of earth

Poorly confined ; the radiant tracts on high

Are her exalted range, intent to gaze

Creation through, and, from that full complex

Of never-ending wonders, to conceive

1785

Of the SOLE BEING right, who spoke the word,

And Nature moved complete. With inward view,

Thence on th' ideal kingdom swift she turns

Her eye ; and instant, at her powerful glance,

Th' obedient phantoms vanish or appear ;

Compound, divide, and into order shift,

Each to his rank, from plain perception up

To the fair forms of fancy's fleeting train :

To reason then, deducing truth from truth,

1790

And notion quite abstract ; where first begins

The world of spirits, action all, and life

1795

Unfetter'd and unmix'd. But here the cloud

(So wills Eternal Providence) sits deep :

Enough for us to know that this dark state,

In wayward passions lost and vain pursuits,

1800

This infancy of being cannot prove

The final issue of the works of God.

By boundless Love and perfect Wisdom form'd,

And ever rising with the rising mind.

1780. *Inferior world:* The connection shows that a ship is here intended. The expression is very appropriate and yet original.

A U T U M N.

AUTUMN.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

AUTUMN is too eventful a period in the history of the year within the temperate parts of the globe, to require foreign aid for rendering it more varied and interesting. The promise of the Spring is now fulfilled. The silent and gradual process of maturation is completed; and Human Industry beholds with triumph the rich products of its toil. The vegetable tribes disclose their infinitely varied forms of *fruit*; which term, while, with respect to common use, it is confined to a few peculiar modes of fructification, in the more comprehensive language of the naturalist, includes every product of vegetation by which the rudiments of a future progeny are developed and separated from the parent plant. These are in part collected and stored up by those animals for whose sustenance, during the ensuing sleep of winter, they are provided. The rest, furnished with various contrivances for dissemination, are scattered, by the friendly winds which now begin to blow, over the surface of that earth which they are to clothe and decorate. The young of the animal race, which Spring and Summer had brought forth and cherished, having now acquired sufficient vigor, quit their concealments and offer themselves to the pursuit of the carnivorous among their fellow-animals, and of the great destroyer man.

Thus the scenery is enlivened with the various sports of the hunter; which, however repugnant they may appear to that system of general benevolence and sympathy which philosophy

would inculcate, have ever afforded a most agreeable exertion to the human powers, and have much to plead in their favor as a necessary part of the great plan of Nature. Indeed, she marks her intention with sufficient precision by refusing to grant any longer those friendly shades which had grown for the protection of the infant offspring. The grove loses its honors; but before they are entirely tarnished an adventitious beauty, arising from that gradual decay which loosens the withering leaf, gilds the Autumnal landscape with a temporary splendor superior to the verdure of Spring or the luxuriance of Summer. The infinitely various and ever-changing hues of the leaves at this season, melting into every soft gradation of tint and shade, have long engaged the imitation of the painter, and are equally happy ornaments in the description of the poet.

These unvarying symptoms of approaching Winter now warn several of the winged tribes to prepare for their aerial voyage to those happy climates of perpetual summer, where no deficiency of food or shelter can ever distress them; and about the same time other fowls of hardier constitution, which are contented with escaping the iron winters of the arctic regions, arrive to supply the vacancy. Thus the striking scenes afforded by that wonderful part of the economy of Nature, the migration of birds, present themselves at this season to the poet. The thickening fogs, the heavy rains, the swollen rivers, while they deform the sinking period of the year, add new subjects to the pleasing variety which reigns throughout its whole course, and which justifies the poet's character of it, as the season when the Muse "best exerts her voice."

AIKIN.

A u t u m n.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed.—Addressed to Mr. Onslow.—A prospect of the fields ready for harvest.—Reflections in praise of industry raised by that view.—Reaping.—A tale relative to it.—A harvest storm.—Shooting and hunting, their barbarity.—A ludicrous account of fox-hunting.—A view of an orchard.—Wall-fruit.—A vineyard.—A description of fogs, frequent in the latter part of Autumn: whence a digression, inquiring into the rise of fountains and rivers.—Birds of season considered, that now shift their habitation.—The prodigious number of them that cover the northern and western isles of Scotland.—Hence a view of the country.—A prospect of the discolored, fading woods.—After a gentle dusky day, moonlight.—Autumnal meteora.—Morning; to which succeeds a calm, pure, sunshiny day, such as usually shuts up the season.—The harvest being gathered in, the country is dissolved in joy.—The whole concludes with a panegyric on a philosophical country life.

CROWN'D with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf, X
While Autumn, nodding o'er the yellow plain,
Comes joyial on; the Doric reed once more,
Well pleased, I tune. Whate'er the Wintry frost

1-3. *Crowned, &c.*: The impersonation here is complete (I quote the language of Prof. Wilson), and though the sex of Autumn is not mentioned, it is manifestly meant to be male. So far there is nothing amiss either one way or another. But "nodding o'er the yellow plain" is a mere statement of a fact in nature, and descriptive of the growing and ripening or ripened harvest; whereas it is applied here to Autumn as a figure who "comes joyful on." This is not obscurity, or indistinctness—which is often a great beauty in impersonation—but it is an inconsistency and a contradiction, and therefore indefensible on any ground either of conception or expression.

3, 4. *The Doric reed once more I tune*: A poetic way of saying that he

Nitrous prepared ; the various blossom'd Spring
 Put in white promise forth ; and Summer-suns
 Concocted strong, rush boundless now to view,
 Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.

was now beginning another poem—that he was about to describe in verse the operations and phenomena of the Autumn. The reed or flute was an instrument used by the Muses at Mount Parnassus in Greece, near which mount the small district of *Doris* was situated. The *once more* will be understood when it is stated that Autumn was the last of the "Seasons" in the order of their composition and publication.

The subject of this note derives a happy illustration from the history of music and its relation to poetry. In the language of Dr. Blair:—"The first poets sang their own verses; and hence the beginning of what we call versification, or words arranged in a more artful order than prose, so as to be suited to some tune or melody. The music of that early period was, beyond doubt, extremely simple; and must have consisted chiefly of such pathetic notes as the voice could adapt to the words of the song. Musical instruments, such as flutes, and pipes, and a lyre, or harp, with a very few strings, appear to have been early invented among some nations; but no more was intended by these instruments than simply to accompany the voice and heighten the melody of song. The poet's strain was always heard; and from many circumstances it appears that among the ancient Greeks, as well as among other nations, the bard sung his verses, and played upon his harp at the same time. In this state the art of music was when it produced all those great effects of which we read so much in ancient history."

5. Nitrous prepared: It is difficult to say what Thomson meant by this expression, as it cannot be supposed that in his day the existence of nitrogen in snow (as an element of ammonia) was known, and which serves a valuable purpose in the economy of vegetation. To this probably a recent author refers when he remarks with reference to the effects of snow on the soil, that "the *nitrous* particles which it contains are said to be of a fertilizing quality, and as it gradually melts, these particles penetrate the earth, being carried to the roots of the plants, mingled with the water into which it is converted." In Thomson's day chemistry was, as a science, yet in its infancy. The terms *nitre* and *nitrous* were often used in a vague sense for saline substances and saline properties. The frost, or snow the product of frost, was then supposed, from its fertilizing influence, to incorporate some of these qualities. Thus Sturm speaks of the saline particles which float in the air, and by uniting with the snow, occasion it to crystallize into flakes of regular form. Perhaps Thomson only speaks of frost as resembling nitre in its appearance: *Whate'er the wintry frost nitrous* (having the aspect of nitre) *prepared.*

10

Onslow! the Muse, ambitious of thy name,
 To grace, inspire, and dignify her song,
 Would from the public voice thy gentle ear
 Awhile engage. Thy noble care she knows,
 The patriot virtues that distend thy thought,
 Spread on thy front, and in thy bosom glow;
 While listening senates hang upon thy tongue,
 Devolving through the maze of eloquence,
 A roll of periods sweeter than her song.
 But she too pants for public virtue; she,
 Though weak of power, yet strong in ardent will,
 Whene'er her country rushes on her heart,
 Assumes a bolder note, and fondly tries
 To mix the patriot's with the poet's flame.

15

20

9. *Onslow:* To this same then distinguished gentleman, Dr. Young dedicated the first of the "Night Thoughts." If the following lines contain no more than a just tribute, we can see a fitness in dedicating the poem to him.

21. *To mix, &c.:* Thomson gave utterance to his patriotic sentiments most fully and distinctly in his poem, "Britannia," which was designed and adapted to rouse the nation to revenge the interruptions of their trade by the Spaniards in America; and in another and more elaborate poem, entitled "Liberty," which was published after an extensive tour on the continent with the Honorable Charles Talbot, on whom he attended, much to the advantage of the poet in the enlargement of his views of men and things, and in the cultivation of his taste. Two years were, after his return to England, bestowed upon the composition of this his most favorite poem, and one from which he anticipated the largest remuneration of every kind: but he suffered in this expectation a most unlooked-for and bitter disappointment. It has never been popular—"No man," as one remarks, "was animated by a stronger or more disinterested love of public freedom than Thomson, and he everywhere inculcates patriotic sentiments; but his 'Liberty' neither stimulates our patriotism, nor increases our veneration for his idol."

The same writer accounts for this result as follows:—"To the power of painting scenery and delineating the softer and more pleasing traits of character, Thomson's genius seems to have been confined; but he was incapable of describing the heart when assailed by boisterous passions, and his representations of ambition, patriotism, or revenge, are comparatively feeble."

FIELDS READY FOR HARVEST.

When the bright Virgin gives the beauteous days,
 And Libra weighs in equal scales the year ;
 From heaven's high cope the fierce effulgence shook 25
 Of parting Summer, a sérener blue,
 With golden light enliven'd, wide invests
 The happy world. Attemper'd suns arise,
 Sweet beam'd, and shedding oft through lucid clouds
 A pleasing calm ; while broad, and brown, below 30
 Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
 Rich, silent, deep, they stand ; for not a gale
 Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain ;
 A calm of plenty ! till the ruffled air
 Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow. 35
 Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky ;
 The clouds fly different, and the sudden sun
 By fits effulgent gilds th' illumined field,
 And black by fits the shadows sweep along :
 A gayly checker'd, heart-expanding view, 40
 Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
 Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.

23, 24. *The bright Virgin* is the constellation *Virgo*, the sixth from Aries; the sun enters it on the 22d of August. The epithet *bright* may be applied to it either from the star Spica of the first magnitude which it contains, or from the brightness of the sun's rays at that period. *Libra*, the Balance, is the seventh from Aries, and is so called because the astronomical year, commencing with Aries, is then half accomplished. This is the poet's idea; but a better reason for the name is the fact that when the sun enters this sign the days and nights are equal over the globe.

25. *Cope*: Arch or concave of the sky.

26-42. While Summer is retiring, amid rain and fire, Autumn has already appeared: with a matron-like grace she takes the vacant throne, and, "crowned with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf," begins her reign. The air is calm and the fields are ripe.—C.

Corn is used by British writers in a larger sense than with us—to indicate all the various kinds of grain.

THE MANIFOLD BLESSINGS OF INDUSTRY, AND THE PROGRESS OF
SOCIETY.

These are thy blessings, Industry ! rough power !
 Whom labor still attends, and sweat, and pain ;
 Yet the kind source of every gentle art,
 And all the soft civility of life :
 Raiser of humankind ! by Nature cast,
 Naked and helpless, out amid the woods
 And wilds, to rude inclement elements ;
 With various seeds of art deep in the mind
 Implanted, and profusely poured around
 Materials infinite ; but idle all.
 Still unexerted, in th' unconscious breast,
 Slept the lethargic powers : corruption still,
 Voracious, swallow'd what the liberal hand
 Of bounty scatter'd o'er the savage year ;
 And still the sad barbarian, roving, mix'd
 With beasts of prey ; or, for his acorn-meal,
 Fought the fierce tusky boar : a shivering wretch,
 Aghast and comfortless, when the bleak north,
 With Winter charged, let the mix'd tempest fly,
 Hail, rain, and snow, and bitter-breathing frost.
 Then to the shelter of the hut he fled,
 And the wild season, sordid, pined away.
 For home he had not : home is the resort

45

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65, 66. *Home is the resort*, &c. : The description here given of home is beautiful—honorable alike to the genius, the taste, and social training of the poet. He had been favored in early life with a pious, intelligent, and happy home ; but the death of his excellent father, when the young poet was yet at the University in Edinburgh, and the necessity, arising out of the slender circumstances of the family, of undertaking to support himself by the efforts of his genius, directed his steps, at the age of twenty-five, to London, in the hope of there acquiring fame as well as subsistence. His mother, it is said, was a person of uncommon natural endowments, possessed of every social and domestic virtue, and gifted moreover with

Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
Supporting and supported, polish'd friends
And dear relations mingle into bliss.

But this the rugged savage never felt,
E'en desolate in crowds ; and thus his days
Roll'd heavy, dark, and unenjoy'd along ;
A waste of time ! till Industry approach'd,
And roused him from his miserable sloth ;
His faculties unfolded ; pointed out,

Where lavish Nature the directing hand
Of art demanded ; show'd him how to raise
His feeble force by the mechanic powers,
To dig the mineral from the vaulted earth ;

70

75

an imagination scarcely inferior, in vivacity and warmth, to her son's. To his parents he was largely indebted for a religious education, the advantage of which shines forth with great beauty in his poems. With many tears he left his affectionate mother in 1725, in setting out for London ; and upon the occasion of her death, which soon after occurred, he prepared a touching elegy, in which he commemoates his pain at parting with her. A part of this elegy, as an illustration of his strong filial and home attachment, I will introduce :

Still, still ! is she my soul's divinest theme,
The waking vision, and the wailing dream :
Amid the ruddy sun's enlivening blaze
O'er my dark eyes her dewy image plays,
And in the dread dominion of the night
Shines out again the sadly pleasing sight.

* * * * *
But ah ! that night—that torturing night remains :—
May darkness dye it with its deepest stains,
When on the margin of the briny flood
Chill'd with a sad pressaging damp I stood,
Took the last look, ne'er to behold her more,
And mixed our murmurs with the wavy roar,
Heard the last words fall from her pious tongue,
Then, wild into the bulging vessel flung,
Which soon, too soon conveyed me from her sight,
Dearer than life, and liberty, and light !

Though it does not appear from the biographical accounts of Thomson that he ever returned to Scotland, even to make a visit, which may awaken surprise, yet there is abundant evidence that he did not forget his needy sisters, but occasionally wrote to them and made remittances for their support and comfort.

- On what to turn the piercing rage of fire ;
 On what the torrent, and the gather'd blast ; 80
 Gave the tall ancient forest to his axe ;
 Taught him to chip the wood, and hew the stone,
 Till by degrees the finish'd fabric rose ;
 Tore from his limbs the blood-polluted fur,
 And wrapp'd them in the woolly vestment warm,
 Or bright in glossy silk and flowing lawn ;
 With wholesome viands fill'd his table ; pour'd
 The generous glass around, inspired to wake
 The life-refining soul of decent wit : -
 Nor stopp'd at barren bare necessity ; 90
 But still advancing bolder, led him on
 To pomp, to pleasure, elegance, and grace ;
 And, breathing high ambition through his soul,
 Set science, wisdom, glory, in his view,
 And bade him be the lord of all below. 95
- Then gathering men their natural powers combined,
 And form'd a Public ; to the general good | *Scam*
 Submitting, aiming, and conducting all.
 For this the patriot council met, the full,
 The free, and fairly represented whole ; 100
 For this they plann'd the holy guardian laws,
 Distinguish'd orders, animated arts,
 And with joint force, oppression chaining, set
 Imperial Justice at the helm ; yet still
 To them accountable : nor, slavish, dream'd 105
 That toiling millions must resign their weal,
 And all the honey of their search, to such
 As for themselves alone themselves have raised.

Hence, every form of cultivated life,
 In order set, protected, and inspired,
Into perfection wrought. Uniting all,
 Society grew numerous, high, polite,
 And happy. Nurse of art ! the city rear'd 110

In beauteous pride her tower-encircled head; .

And, stretching street on street, by thousands drew, 115

From twining woody haunts, or the tough yew

To bows strong-straining, her aspiring sons. —

Then commerce brought into the public walk

The busy merchant; the big warehouse built;

Raised the strong crane; choked up the loaded street 120

With foreign plenty; and thy stream, O Thames,

Large, gentle, deep, majestic, king of floods!

Chose for his grand resort. On either hand,

Like a long wintry forest, groves of masts

Shot up their spires; the bellying sheet between

125

Possess'd the breezy void; the sooty hulk

Steer'd sluggish on; the splendid barge along

Row'd, regular to harmony; around,

The boat, light skimming, stretch'd its oary wings;

While deep the various voice of fervent toil

130

From bank to bank increased: whence ribb'd with oak,

To bear the British thunder, black and bold,

The roaring vessel rush'd into the main.

Then too the pillar'd dome, magnific, heaved

Its ample roof; and luxury within

135

Pour'd out her glittering stores. The canvas smooth,

With glowing life protuberant, to the view

Embodyed rose; the statue seem'd to breathe,

And soften into flesh, beneath the touch

Of forming art, imagination-flush'd.

140

All is the gift of Industry; whate'er

Exalts, embellishes, and renders life

116. *Yew*: An evergreen of the pine genus, furnishing valuable timber for ships, and used by the yeomanry of England in former times for making bows of great power and effect. The *strong-straining* effort in bending them for this purpose is indicated in the text.

141-3. While the sickle is moving, and the yellow grain falling, Commerce crowds the Thames with a grove of masts: Art, on its banks, makes the "pillared domes" arise, the smooth canvas glow with life, and

Delightful. Pensive Winter cheer'd by him,
Sits at the social fire, and happy hears
Th' excluded tempest idly rave along.

145

His harden'd fingers deck the gaudy Spring. —
Without him, Summer were an arid waste ;
Nor to th' Autumnal months could thus transmit
Those full, mature, immeasurable stores,

That waving round, recall my wandering song.

150

REAPING. X

Soon as the morning trembles o'er the sky,
And, unperceived, unfolds the spreading day,
Before the ripen'd field the reapers stand,
In fair array ; each by the lass he loves—
To bear the rougher part, and mitigate
By nameless gentle offices her toil.

155

At once they stoop and swell the lusty sheaves ;
While through their cheerful band the rural talk,
The rural scandal, and the rural jest,
Fly harmless, to deceive the tedious time,
And steal unfehl the sultry hours away.

160

Behind the master walks, builds up the shocks ;
And, conscious, glancing oft on every side
His sated eye, feels his heart heave with joy.
The gleaners spread around, and here and there,
Spike after spike, their scanty harvest pick. —
Be not too narrow, husbandmen ! but fling

165

the stubble seem to breathe and soften into flesh. The poet imputes this to the right cause.—C.

166. 176. *Be not, &c.* : The benevolence of the poet here constructs a most eloquent appeal, which may be easily and usefully directed to other classes of the poor. A similar appeal is made in 350-359.

Dr. Murdoch, in his biography of Thomson, says :—As for his more distinguishing qualities of mind and heart, they are better represented in his writings than they can be by the pen of any biographer. There, his

From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,
 The liberal handful. Think, oh grateful think !
 How good the God of Harvest is to you,
 Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields ;
 While these unhappy partners of your kind
 Wide hover round you, like the fowls of heaven,
 And ask their humble dole. The various turns
 Of fortune ponder ; that your sons may want
 What now, with hard reluctance, faint ye give.

170

175

LAVINIA AND PALEMON.

The lovely young Lavinia once had friends ;
 And fortune smiled, deceitful, on her birth :
 For, in her helpless years deprived of all,
 Of every stay, save innocence and Heaven,
 She, with her widow'd mother, feeble, old,
 And poor, lived in a cottage, far retired
 Among the windings of a woody vale ;
 By solitude and deep surrounding shades,
 But more by bashful modesty, conceal'd.
 Together thus they shunn'd the cruel scorn,
 Which virtue, sunk to poverty, would meet
 From giddy passion and low-minded pride :
 Almost on Nature's common bounty fed ;
 Like the gay birds that sung them to repose,
 Content, and careless of to-morrow's fare.

180

185

190

love of mankind, of his country and friends, his devotion to the Supreme Being, founded on the most elevated and just conceptions of his operations and providence, shine out in every page. So unbounded was his tenderness of heart, that it took in even the brute creation : judge what it must have been towards his own species. He is not indeed known, through his whole life, to have given any person one moment's pain, by his writings or otherwise.

177. This story is introduced by way of illustrating and enforcing the beautiful appeal contained in the last paragraph.

Her form was fresher than the morning rose,
When the dew wets its leaves ; unstain'd and pure,
As is the lily or the mountain snow.

The modest virtues mingled in her eyes, 195

Still on the ground dejected, darting all
Their humid beams into the blooming flowers :

Or, when the mournful tale her mother told,
Of what her faithless fortune promised once,

Thrill'd in her thought, they, like the dewy star 200

Of evening, shone in tears. A native grace
Sat fair proportion'd on her polish'd limbs,

Veil'd in a simple robe, their best attire,

Beyond the pomp of dress ; for loveliness

Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,

But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.

Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self,

Recluse amid the close-embowering woods.

As in the hollow breast of Apennine,

Beneath the shelter of encircling hills,

205

210

207-217. The history of the composition of this passage is thus related by Chambers :—One of the finest and most picturesque similes in the work was supplied by Pope, to whom Thomson had given an interleaved copy of the edition of 1786. The quotation will not be out of place here, as it is honorable to the friendship of the brother poets, and tends to show the importance of careful revision, without which no excellence can be attained in literature or the arts. How deeply must it be regretted that Pope did not oftener write in blank verse ! Describing Lavinia, the lines were—

Thoughtless of boauty, she was Beauty's self,
Recluse among the woods ; if city dames
Will deign their faith ; and thus she went, compell'd
By strong necessity, with as serene
And pleased a look as Patience e'er put on,
To glean Palemon's fields.

Pope drew his pen through this description, and supplied the following lines (those of the present text), which Thomson must have been too much gratified with not to adopt with pride and pleasure—and so they stand in all the subsequent editions.

A myrtle rises, far from human eye,
 And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild ;
 So flourish'd, blooming and unseen by all,
 The sweet Lavinia ; till, at length, compell'd
 By strong necessity's supreme command, 215
 With smiling patience in her looks, she went
 To glean Palemon's fields. The pride of swains
 Palemon was, the generous and the rich ;
 Who led the rural life in all its joy
 And elegance, such as Arcadian song 220
 Transmits from ancient uncorrupted times ;
When tyrant custom had not shackled man,
But free to follow Nature was the mode.

217. *To glean, &c.* : In European countries (says Duncan) the humane practice prevails of permitting the poor to glean the grain-fields, after the reapers. It is a practice obviously founded on the Mosaic law, and is at least as old as the entrance of the children of Israel. By that law, the destitute inhabitants were permitted to glean three different sorts of produce,—that of the vine, that of the olive, and that of grain. With the view of rendering this law effective for the relief of the poor, it was required that after the olive-tree was beaten the owner should not "go over the boughs again," and that when the grapes were gathered, he should not "glean the vineyard afterwards;" what was left, in both cases, becoming the property of "the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow." In like manner, and for the same object, when the farmer reaped his grain, he was forbidden to make "a clean riddance" of the corners of the field, or to gather any of the gleanings; and he was even enjoined to abstain from removing, for his own use, any sheaf which, when carrying home his grain, he might inadvertently have left behind. Every one is acquainted with the beautiful and affecting story of Ruth, the Moabitess, in which this practice, as it prevailed among the descendants of Abraham, is graphically introduced. The benevolent intention of this law cannot be mistaken; and the custom, though not enjoined by the Gospel, is too conformable to its spirit to have been overlooked or neglected in almost any quarter where Christianity has extended its influence.

220. *Arcadian song* : Arcadia was located in the centre of the Peloponnesus—a district of mountains and valleys and streams, for the most part adapted and devoted to pastoral pursuits. It was the Alpine country of Greece, and the rural habits of its people are said to have been similar to those of the people of the Alps.

- He then, his fancy with autumnal scenes
 Amusing, chanced beside his reaper-train
 To walk, when poor Lavinia drew his eye ;
 Unconscious of her power, and turning quick
 With unaffected blushes from his gaze. 225
- He saw her charming, but he saw not half
 The charms her downcast modesty conceal'd.
 That very moment love and chaste desire
 Sprung in his bosom, to himself unknown ;
 For still the world prevail'd, and its dread laugh,
 Which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn,
 Should his heart own a gleaner in the field ; 230
 And thus in secret to his soul he sigh'd :
 " What pity ! that so delicate a form,
 By beauty kindled, where enlivening sense
 And more than vulgar goodness seem to dwell,
 Should be devoted to the rude embrace 235
 Of some indecent clown. She looks, methinks,
 Of old Acasto's line ! and to my mind
 Recalls that patron of my happy life,
 From whom my liberal fortune took its rise ;
 Now to the dust gone down ; his houses, lands, 240
 And once fair-spreading family, dissolved.
 'Tis said, that in some lone, obscure retreat,
 Urged by remembrance sad, and decent pride,
 Far from those scenes which knew their better days,
 His aged widow and his daughter live, 245
 Whom yet my fruitless search could never find.
 Romantic wish ! would this the daughter were !"

stilted

229. *Her charming*: An elliptical and classical form of expression—meaning, he saw that she was a charming, or highly agreeable person.

242. *Acasto*: A former friend and benefactor of Palemon—who had been a man of generous heart and ample means, but before he died became reduced in circumstances, and left his widow and beautiful daughter in a condition of penury.

Then throw that shameful pittance from thy hand,
 But ill applied to such a rugged task.
 The fields, the master, all, my fair, are thine ; 290
 If to the various blessings which thy house
 Has on me lavish'd, thou wilt add that bliss,
 That dearest bliss, the power of blessing thee !"

Here ceased the youth ; yet still his speaking eye
 Express'd the sacred triumph of his soul, 295
With conscious virtue, gratitude, and love,
Above the vulgar joy divinely raised.

Nor waited he reply. Won by the charm
 Of goodness irresistible, and all
 In sweet disorder lost, she blush'd consent.

The news immediate to her mother brought,
 While, pierced with anxious thought, she pined away
 The lonely moments for Lavinia's fate ;
 Amazed, and scarce believing what she heard,
 Joy seized her wither'd veins, and one bright gleam 305
 Of setting life shone on her evening hours ;
 Not less enraptured than the happy pair,
 Who flourish'd long in tender bliss, and rear'd
 A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves,
 And good, the grace of all the country round.

310

X
 A HARVEST STORM.

Defeating oft the labors of the year,
The sultry south collects a potent blast. 310
 At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir
 Their trembling tops, and a still murmur runs
 Along the soft-inclining fields of corn.
 But as the aerial tempest fuller swells,

315

812. *The sultry south, &c.*: Amid this genial season, the south seems to grudge the happiness and plenty which Autumn bestows on man, and collects her storms, and lets them loose on the earth.—C

And in one mighty stream, invisible,
 Immense, the whole excited atmosphere
 Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world ;
 Strain'd to the root, the stooping forest pours
 A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves. 320

High beat, the circling mountains eddy in,
 From the bare wild, the dissipated storm,
 And send it in a torrent down the vale.
 Exposed, and naked to its utmost rage, 325
 Through all the sea of harvest rolling round,
 The billowy plain floats wide ; nor can evade,
 Though pliant to the blast, its seizing force ;
 Or whirl'd in air, or into vacant chaff
 Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain, 330
 Swept from the black horizon, broad descends
 In one continuous flood. Still overhead
 The mingling tempest weaves its gloom, and still
 The deluge deepens ; till the fields around
 Lie sunk and flattened in the sordid wave. 335

Sudden the ditches swell ; the meadows swim.
 Red, from the hills, innumerable streams
 Tumultuous roar ; and high above its banks
 The river lift ; before whose rushing tide,
 Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages, and swains, 340
 Roll mingled down : all that the winds had spared
 In one wild moment ruin'd ; the big hopes
 And well-earn'd treasures of the painful year.
 Fled to some eminence, the husbandman,
 Helpless, beholds the miserable wreck 345
 Driving along ; his drowning ox at once
 Descending, with his labors scatter'd round,
 He sees ; and instant o'er his shivering thought
 Comes Winter unprovided, and a train
 Of claimant children dear. Ye masters, then,
 Be mindful of the rough laborious hand 350

That sinks you soft in elegance and ease ;
 Be mindful of those limbs in russet clad,
 Whose toil to yours is warmth and graceful pride ;
 And, oh ! be mindful of that sparing board, 355
 Which covers yours with luxury profuse,
 Makes your glass sparkle, and your sense rejoice !
 Nor cruelly demand what the deep rains
 And all involving winds have swept away.

SHOOTING AND HUNTING—THEIR BARBARY.

Here the rude clamor of the sportsman's joy, 360
 The gun fast thundering, and the winded horn,
 Would tempt the Muse to sing the rural game ;
 How in his mid career the spaniel struck,
 Stiff, by the tainted gale, with open nose,
 Outstretch'd, and finely sensible, draws full, 365
 Fearful, and cautious, on the latent prey ; X
 As in the sun the circling covey bask
 Their varied plumes, and, watchful every way,
 Through the rough stubble turn the secret eye.
 Caught in the meshy snare, in vain they beat 370

360. When the rain ceases, and the sky clears, the poet sends to the fields the hunter and his noisy pack ; but while he surrenders to him the healthy but cruel sports of the chase, he forbids the gentler sex (570-608).—C.

370. *Meshy snare* : Snare formed of net-work to catch birds. *Covey* is a small flock of birds. Upon the mode of catching birds and upon its moral aspects, Mrs. Ellis observes :—There is a scene exhibited every day throughout the summer months, in the outskirts of London, which it is possible to contemplate until the mind is filled with misanthropy, and we learn to loathe and shun our own species. In fields sufficiently remote from the city to admit of their being the resort of birds, men are accustomed to station themselves with a trap and snare, in order to obtain a supply of singing birds for the London markets. The trap is a large net, so contrived that it can be drawn up in a moment : the snare is a little chirping bird, tied fast to the end of a pliant stick, which rebounds with the flutter of its wings, and thus the bird alternately rising and sinking has something

Their idle wings, entangled more and more :
 Nor on the surges of the boundless air,
 Though borne triumphant, are they safe : the gun,
 Glanced just and sudden from the fowler's eye,
 O'er takes their sounding pinions ; and again, 375
 Immediate, brings them, from the towering wing,
 Dead to the ground ; or drives them wide dispersed,
 Wounded, and wheeling various, down the wind.

These are not subjects for the peaceful Muse,
 Nor will she stain with such her spotless song ; 380
 Then most delighted, when she social sees
 The whole mix'd animal creation round,
 Alive and happy. 'Tis not joy to her,
 This falsely cheerful, barbarous game of death,
 This rage of pleasure, which the restless youth 385
 Awakes, impatient, with the gleaming morn ;
 When beasts of prey retire, that all night long,
 Urged by necessity, had ranged the dark,
 As if their conscious ravage shunn'd the light,
 Ashamed. Not so the steady tyrant man, 390
Who, with the thoughtless insolence of power
 Inflamed, beyond the most infuriate wrath
 Of the worst monster that e'er roam'd the waste,

the appearance of dancing at will upon the light and buoyant spray. The man, the monarch of creation, all the while crouches on the ground to watch his prey, and when one little sufferer has by its fruitless struggles so well mimicked the movements of a joyous flight as to allure its fellow-victims into the snare, the fatal knot is drawn ; the man chooses out from the number the sweetest songsters, and after depositing them separately in an immense number of little cages, brought with him for the purpose, they are conveyed to the market, purchased, and made miserable during the rest of their lives, for the delectation of London ears, and the benefit of society in general.

379, &c. Some remarks are made (167-176) on the benevolence of Thomson's disposition. We have here another exquisite exhibition of the same amiable trait, which deserves to be imitated as well as admired. His indignation at the cruelties of the chase is forcibly expressed.

For sport alone pursues the cruel chase,
Amid the beamings of the gentle days.
Upbraid, ye ravening tribes, our wanton rage,
For hunger kindles you, and lawless want ;
But lavish fed, in Nature's bounty roll'd,
To joy at anguish, and delight in blood,
Is what your horrid bosoms never knew.

400

Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare !
Scared from the corn, and now to some lone seat
Retired ; the rushy fen ; the ragged furze,
Stretch'd o'er the stony heath ; the stubble chapt ;
The thistly lawn ; the thick-entangled broom ;
Of the same friendly hue, the wither'd fern ;
The fallow ground laid open to the sun,
> Concoptive ; and the nodding sandy bank,
Hung o'er the mazes of the mountain brook.
Vain is her best precaution ; though she sits

405

410

403. *Ragged furze*: The furze, or whin, is a thorny evergreen shrub, quite common in the plains and on the hills of Great Britain. It bears a beautiful yellow flower.

408. *Concoptive*: Denoting the influence which the sun exerts to render the fallow ground productive.

410-18. Professor Wilson of Edinburgh, the philosopher, the critic, the poet, the sportsman of Scotland, gives this lively picture of the hare :— One often hears of a cunning old fox ; but the cunningest old fox is a simpleton to the most guileless young hare. What deceit in every double ! What calculation in every squat ! Of what far more complicated than Cretan labyrinth is the creature, now hunted for the first time, sitting in the centre ! a-listening the baffled roar ! Now into the pool she plunges to free herself from the fatal scent that lures on death. Now down the torrent course she runs and leaps, to cleanse it from her poor paws, fur-protected from the sharp flints that lame the fiends that so sorely beset her, till many limp along in their own blood. Now along the coping of stone walls she crawls and scrambles ; and now ventures from the wood along the frequented high road, heedless of danger from the front, so that she may escape the horrid growling in the rear. Now into the pretty little garden of the wayside, or even the village cot, she creeps, as if to implore protection from the innocent children or the nursing mother. Yea, she will even seek refuge in the sanctuary of the cradle.

Conceal'd, with folded ears, unsleeping eyes,
 By Nature raised to take the horizon in,
 And head couch'd close betwixt her hairy feet,
 In act to spring away. The scented dew
 Betrays her early labyrinth ; and deep, 415
 In scatter'd, sullen openings, far behind,
 With every breeze she hears the coming storm.
 But nearer, and more frequent, as it loads
 The sighing gale, she springs amazed, and all
 The savage soul of game is up at once : 420
 The pack full opening, various ; the shrill horn,
 Resounded from the hills ; the neighing steed,
 Wild for the chase ; and the loud hunters' shout ;
 O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all
 Mix'd in mad tumult and discordant joy. 425

The stag, too, singled from the herd, where long
 He ranged the branching monarch of the shades, *✓*
 Before the tempest drives. At first, in speed
 He, sprightly, puts his faith ; and, roused by fear,
 Gives all his swift aerial soul to flight. 430
 Against the breeze he darts, that way the more
 To leave the lessening, murderous cry behind.
 Deception short ! though fleeter than the winds
 Blown o'er the keen-air'd mountain by the north,
 He bursts the thickets, glances through the glades, 435
 And plunges deep into the wildest wood ;
 If slow, yet sure, adhesive to the track,
 Hot steaming, up behind him come again
 Th' inhuman rout, and from the shady depth
 Expel him, circling through his every shift. 440
 He sweeps the forest oft ; and sobbing sees |

412. *Raised, &c.* : The eye of the hare is remarkably prominent, so that it is fitted to take in a large compass of view—to discover objects behind as well as before.

439. *Rout* : Pack of hounds.

The glades, mild op'ning to the golden day ;
 Where, in kind contest, with his butting friends
 He wont to struggle, or his loves enjoy.

Oft in the full-descending flood he tries 445

To lose the scent, and lave his burning sides :
 Oft seeks the herd ; the watchful herd, alarm'd,
 With selfish care avoid a brother's woe.

What shall he do ? His once so vivid nerves,
 So full of buoyant spirit, now no more 450

Inspire the course ; but fainting, breathless toil,

> Sick, seizes on his heart. He stands at bay,
 And puts his last weak refuge in despair.
 The big round tears run down his dappled face ;
 He groans in anguish ; while the growling pack, 455
 Blood-happy, hang at his fair jutting chest,
 And mark his beauteous checker'd sides with gore.

Of this enough. But if the sylvan youth,
 Whose fervent blood boils into violence,
 Must have the chase ; behold, despising flight, 460
 The roused-up lion, resolute and slow,
 Advancing full on the pretended spear
 And coward-band, that circling wheel aloof.
 Slunk from the cavern and the troubled wood,
 See the grim wolf ; on him his shaggy foe 465
 Vindictive fix, and let the ruffian die :
 Or, growling horrid, as the brindled boar
 Grins fell destruction, to the monster's heart
 Let the dart lighten from the nervous arm. ✓

THE FOX-HUNT.

These Britain knows not ; give, ye Britons, then 470
 Your sportive fury, pitiless, to pour

442. *Glades* : Open or cleared spaces in a forest.

Loose on the nightly robber of the fold.
 Him, from his craggy winding haunts unearth'd,
 Let all the thunder of the chase pursue.
 Throw the broad ditch behind you ; o'er the hedge 475

470-496. Though we have here an exact picture of fox-hunting, the favorite sport of Great Britain, it may gratify some readers to contemplate a larger picture, drawn by Prof. Wilson, the Christopher North of Blackwood :

" Well, do you know, that after all you have said, Mr. North, I cannot understand the passion and the pleasure of fox-hunting ! It seems to me both cruel and dangerous."

" Cruelty ! Is there cruelty in laying the rein on the necks of their horses and delivering them up to their high condition—for every throbbing vein is visible—at the first full burst of that maddening cry, and letting loose to their delight the living thunderbolts ? Danger ? What danger but of breaking their own legs, necks, or backs, and those of their riders ? What though it be but a smallish, reddish-brown, sharp-nosed animal, with pricked-up ears, and passionately fond of poultry, that they pursue ? After the first tally-ho, Reynard is rarely seen, till he is run in upon—once perhaps in the whole run, skirting a wood, or crossing a common. It is an idea that is pursued, on a whirlwind of horses to a storm of canine music, worthy both of the largest lion that ever leaped among a band of Moors, sleeping at midnight by an extinguished fire on the African sands. There is, we verily believe it, nothing foxy in the fancy of one man in all that glorious field of three hundred. Once off and away—while wood and welkin ring—and nothing is felt—nothing is imaged in that hurricane flight, but scorn of all obstructions, dikes, ditches, drains, brooks, palings, canals, rivers, and all the impediments reared in the way of so many rejoicing madmen, by nature, art, and science, in an inclosed, cultivated, civilized, and Christian country. There they go—prince and peer, baronet and squire—the nobility and gentry of England, the flower of the men of the earth, each on such steed as Pollux never reined, nor Philip's warlike son. Hedges, trees, groves, gardens, orchards, woods, farm-houses, huts, halls, mansions, palaces, spires, steeples, towns, and temples, all go wavering by, each demi-god seeing, or seeing them not, as his winged steed skims or labors along, to the swelling or sinking music. Crash goes the timber of the five-barred gate ; away over the ears flies the ex-rough rider in a surprising somerset ; after a succession of stumbles, down is the gallant gray on knees and nose, making sad work among the fallow. * * * * * ' Every man for himself, and God for us all,' is the devout and ruling apothegm of the day. If death befall, what wonder ! since horse and man are mortal ; but death loves better a wide soft bed, with quiet curtains and darkened windows in a still room, the clergyman



High bound, restless; nor the deep mœss
Refuse, but through the shaking wilderness
Pick your nice way. Into the perilous flood
Bear fearless, of the raging instinct full;
And as you ride the torrent, to the banks 480
Your triumph sound sonorous, running round
From rock to rock, in circling echoes toss'd.
Then scale the mountains to their woody tops;
Rush down the dangerous steep, and o'er the lawn,
In fancy swallowing up the space between, 485
Pour all your speed into the rapid game.
For happy he! who tops the wheeling chase;
Has every maze evolved, and every guile
Disclosed; who knows the merits of the pack;
Who saw the villain seized, and dying hard, 490
Without complaint, though by a hundred mouths
Relentless torn: O glorious he, beyond
His daring peers! when the retreating horn
Calls them to ghostly halls of gray renown,
With woodland honors graced; the fox's fur, 495
Depending decent from the roof; and spread
Round the drear walls, with antic figures fierce,

in the one corner with his prayers, and the physician in another with his pills, making assurance doubly sure, and preventing all possibility of the dying Christian's escape. Let oak branches smite the too slowly stooping skull, or rider's back not timely levelled with his steed's; let faithless bank give way and bury in the brook; let hidden drain yield to fore-feet and work a sudden wreck; * * * * yet, 'without stop or stay the hunter-train flows on; for the music grows fiercer and more savage, —lo! all that remains of the pack, in far more dreadful madness than hydrophobia, leaping out of their skins, under insanity from the scent, now as strong as stink, for Vulpes can hardly now make a crawl of it; and ere he, they, whipper-in, or any one of the other three demoniacs, have time to look in one another's splashed faces, he is torn into a thousand pieces, gobbled up in the general growl; and snug, and smooth, and dry, and warm, and cozy, as he was an hour and twenty-five minutes ago exactly, in his furze-bush in the cover,—he is now piece-meal in about thirty distinct stomachs; and is he not, pray, well off for sepulture!"

The stag's large front. He then is loudest heard,
 When the night staggers with severer toils,
 With feats Thessalian Centaurs never knew,
 And their repeated wonders shake the dome.

500

THE FROLICKSOME SUPPER.

But first the fuel'd chimney blazes wide ;
 The tankards foam ; and the strong table groans
 Beneath the smoking sirloin, stretch'd immense
 From side to side ; in which, with desperate knife,
 They deep incision make, and talk the while
 Of England's glory, ne'er to be defaced
 While hence they borrow vigor : or a main
 Into the pasty plunged, at intervals,
 If stomach keen can intervals allow,

505

Relating all the glories of the chase.

510

Then sated Hunger bids his brother Thirst

Produce the mighty bowl ; the mighty bowl,

Swell'd high with fiery juice, steams liberal round

A potent gale, delicious as the breath

515

Of Maia to the love-sick shepherdess,

On violets diffused, while soft she hears

Her panting shepherd stealing to her arms.

Nor wanting is the brown October, drawn,

Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat

520

Of thirty years ; and now his honest front

Flames in the light resplendent, not afraid

E'en with the vineyard's best produce to vie.

500. *Thessalian Centaurs*: Fabulous beings, half man, half horse, residing in Thessaly. There is a legend of a marriage-feast attended by the Centaurs and Lapithæ, at which, under the influence of wine, great disorder and violence occurred, and several were slain.

516. *Maia*: A Latin name for May.

519. *Brown October*: The brown product of that month. Cider, probably, is meant.

- To cheat the thirsty moments, Whist awhile
 Walks his dull round, beneath a cloud of smoke, 525
 Wreathed, fragrant, from the pipe : or the quick dice,
 In thunder leaping from the box, awake
 The sounding gammon ; while romp-loving miss
 Is haul'd about in gallantry robust.
- At last, these puling idlenesses laid 530
 Aside, frequent and full, the dry divan
 Close in firm circle ; and set, ardent, in
 For serious drinking. Nor evasion sly,
 Nor sober shift is to the puking wretch
 Indulged apart ; but earnest, brimming bowls
 Lave every soul, the table floating round,
 And pavement, faithless to the fuddled foot.
 Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk,
 Vociferous at once from twenty tongues,
 Reels fast from theme to theme ; from horses, hounds, 540
 To church or mistress, politics or ghost,
 In endless mazes, intricate, perplex'd.
 Meantime, with sudden interruption, loud,
 Th' impatient catch bursts from the joyous heart :
 That moment touch'd is every kindred soul ; 545
 And, opening in a full-mouth'd cry of joy,
 The laugh, the slap, the jocund curse go round ; *et vix*
 While, from their slumbers shook, the kennel'd hounds
 Mix in the music of the day again.
 As when the tempest, that has vex'd the deep, 550
 The dark night long, with fainter murmurs falls ;
 So gradual sinks their mirth. Their feeble tongues,

528. *Gammon*: The name of a game played with dice. It is usually called backgammon.

531. *Dry divan*: Thirsty company. The term *divan* is most strictly appropriate to the Turkish council of state; hence humorously applied, as here, to a council of boisterous and hard drinkers.

544. *Catch*: A piece sung by three or four voices, one of which leads, and the others follow in singing the same notes.

Unable to take up the cumbrous word,
 Lie quite dissolved. Before their maudlin eyes,
 Seen dim and blue, the double tapers dance,
 Like the sun wading through the misty sky.
 Then, sliding soft, they drop. Confused above,
 Glasses and bottles, pipes and gazetteers,
 As if the table e'en itself was drunk,
 Lie a wet broken scene ; and wide, below, 555
 Is heap'd the social slaughter ; where astride,
 The lubber Power in filthy triumph sits,
 Slumb'rous, inclining still from side to side,
 And steeps them drench'd in potent sleep till morn.
 Perhaps some doctor of tremendous paunch, 560
 Awful and deep, a black abyss of drink,
 Outlives them all ; and from his buried flock
 Retiring, full of rumination sad,
Laments the weakness of these latter times.

EMPLOYMENTS SUITABLE TO THE WOMEN OF BRITAIN.

But if the rougher sex by this fierce sport 570
 Is hurried wild, let not such horrid joy
 E'er stain the bosom of the British fair.
 Far be the spirit of the chase from them !
 Uncomely courage, unbeseeming skill ;
 To spring the fence, to rein the prancing steed ; 575
 The cap, the whip, the masculine attire ;
 In which they roughen to the sense, and all
 The winning softness of their sex is lost.
In them 'tis graceful to dissolve at woe ;
 With every motion, every word, to wave 580

554. *Maudlin* : Stupid, swollen.

562. *Lubber Power* : The besotting, stupefying power, Intemperance : or, the power that makes lubbers—that is, lazy, idle, good-for-nothing fellows, such as Thomson here so graphically portrays.

Quick o'er the kindling cheek the ready blush :

And from the smallest violence to shrink

Unequal, then the loveliest in their fears :

And by this silent adulation soft,

To their protection more engaging man.

585

O may their eyes no miserable sight,

Save weeping lovers, see ! a nobler game,

Through love's enchanting wiles pursued, yet fled,

In chase ambiguous. May their tender limbs

Float in the loose simplicity of dress !

590

And, fashion'd all to harmony, alone

Know they to seize the captivated soul,

In rapture warbled from love-breathing lips ;

To teach the lute to languish ; with smooth step

Disclosing motion in its every charm,

595

To swim along, and swell the mazy dance ;

To train the foliage o'er the snowy lawn ;

To guide the pencil, turn the tuneful page ;

To lend new flavor to the fruitful year,

And heighten Nature's dainties : in their race

600

To rear their graces into second life ;

To give society its highest taste ;

Well-order'd home man's best delight to make ;

And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,

With every gentle, care-eluding art,

605

To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,

And sweeten all the toils of human life :

This be the female dignity and praise. —

Ye swains, now hasten to the hazel-bank ;

Where, down yon dale, the wildly winding brook

610

Falls hoarse from steep to steep. In close array,

Fit for the thickets and the tangling shrub,

Ye virgins, come. For you their latest song

The woodlands raise ; the clustering nuts for you

The lover finds amid the secret shade ;

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615

And, where they burnish on the topmost bough,
 With active vigor crushes down the tree ;
 Or shakes them ripe from the resigning husk,
 A glossy shower, and of an ardent brown,
 As are the ringlets of Melinda's hair :
 Melinda ! form'd with every grace complete ;
 Yet these neglecting, above beauty wise,
 And far transcending such a vulgar praise.

620

THE FRUIT ORCHARD.

Hence from the busy, joy-resounding fields,
 In cheerful error, let us tread the maze
 Of Autumn, unconfined ; and taste, revived,
 The breath of orchard big with bending fruit.
 Obedient to the breeze and beating ray,
 From the deep-loaded bough a mellow shower
 Incessant melts away. The juicy pear
 Lies in a soft profusion scatter'd round.
 A various sweetness swells the gentle race,
 By Nature's all-refining hand prepared,
 Of temper'd sun, and water, earth, and air,
 In ever-changing composition mix'd.

625

Such, falling frequent through the chiller night,
 The fragrant stores, the wide-projected heaps
 Of apples, which the lusty-handed year,
 InnumEROUS, o'er the blushing orchard shakes.
 A various spirit, fresh, delicious, keen,
 Dwells in their gelid pores ; and, active, points
 The piercing cider for the thirsty tongue ;
 Thy native theme, and boon inspirer too,
 Philips, Pomona's bard, the second thou

630

635

640

625. *Error* : Wandering.644. *Philips* : John Philips entered Oxford University in 1694, became in 1703 author of "The Splendid Shilling," a burlesque poem, in

Who nobly durst, in rhyme-unfetter'd verse,
With British freedom sing the British song ;
How, from Silurian vats, high-sparkling wines
Foam in transparent floods ; some strong, to cheer
The wintry revels of the laboring hind ;
And tasteful some, to cool the summer hours.

645

650

DODDINGTON'S COUNTRY-SEAT.

In this glad season, while his sweetest beams
The sun sheds equal o'er the meeken'd day ;
Oh, lose me in the green delightful walks
Of, Doddington, thy seat, serene and plain ;
Where simple Nature reigns ; and every view,
Diffusive, spreads the pure Dorsetian downs,
In boundless prospect ; yonder shagg'd with wood,
Here rich with harvest, and there white with flocks !
Meantime the grandeur of thy lofty dome,
Far splendid, seizes on the ravish'd eye.

655

660

imitation of the style of Milton, " rhyme-unfettered verse." But his best performance, in the same verse, is a poem on Cider, and which probably led Thomson to designate him *Pomona's bard*, as she was the Pagan goddess of fruits and harvests. He also describes him as the first since Milton who ventured to write in blank verse. Philips thus commences his Poem on Cider :

What soil the apple loves, what care is due
To orchards, timeliest when to press the fruits,
Thy gift, Pomona, in Miltonian verse
Adventurous I presume to sing ; of verse
Nor skilled, nor studious ; but my native soil
Invites me, and the theme as yet unsung.

647. By *Silurian vats*, are meant those in the ancient British kingdom of the *Silures*, answering to southern Wales, and a part of England contiguous to it.

654. *Doddington* : For an account of this gentleman turn back to note on (29) "Summer."

655. *Dorsetian downs* : The extensive and naked hilly lands in the southern part of Dorsetshire, well adapted for the pasturage of sheep.

New beauties rise with each revolving day ;
 New columns swell ; and still the fresh Spring finds
 New plants to quicken, and new groves to green,
 Full of thy genius all ! the Muses' seat ;
 Where, in the secret bower and winding walk, 665
 For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.
 Here wandering oft, fired with the restless thirst
 Of thy applause, I solitary court
 Th' inspiring breeze, and meditate the book
 Of Nature ever open ; aiming thence, 670
Warm from the heart, to learn the moral song.
 Here, as I steal along the sunny wall,
 Where Autumn basks, with fruit empurpled deep,
 My pleasing theme continual prompts my thought :
 Presents the downy peach ; the shining plum ; 675
 The ruddy, fragrant nectarine ; and dark,
 Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious fig.
 The vine too here her curling tendrils shoots,
 Hangs out her clusters, glowing to the south,
 And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky. 680

THE VINEYARD.

Turn we a moment Fancy's rapid flight
 To vigorous soils and climes of fair extent ;
 Where, by the potent sun elated high,
 The vineyard swells refulgent on the day,
 Spreads o'er the vale, or up the mountain climbs, 685
 Profuse ; and drinks amid the sunny rocks,

666. *Virtuous Young* : The distinguished Edward Young, author of the immortal "Night Thoughts," a sublime and religious Poem, worthy of the epithet by which he is here described. He died, at an advanced age, in 1765. For a full account of him I beg leave to refer to my recent edition of that Poem.

To *twine the bay*, is to prepare the laurel crown, as an emblem of *poetic* excellence and superiority.

- From cliff to cliff increased, the heighten'd blaze.
 Low bend the weighty boughs. The clusters clear,
 Half through the foliage seen, or ardent flame,
 Or shine transparent ; while perfection breathes 690
 White o'er the turgent film the living dew.
 As thus they brighten with exalted juice,
 Touch'd into flavor by the mingling ray ;
 The rural youth and virgins o'er the field,
 Each fond for each to cull th' autumnal prime, 695
 Exulting rove, and speak the vintage nigh.
 Then comes the crushing swain ; the country floats,
 And ~~forms~~ unbounded with the mashy flood ;
 That, by degrees fermented and refined,
 Round the raised nations pours the cup of joy : 700
 The claret smooth, red as the lip we press
 In sparkling fancy, while we drain the bowl ;
 The mellow-tasted burgundy ; and quick
 As is the wit it gives, the gay champagne.

AUTUMNAL FOGS, AND ORIGIN OF SPRINGS AND RIVERS.

- Now, by the cool declining year condensed, 705
 Descend the copious exhalations, check'd
 As up the middle sky unseen they stole,
 And roll the doubling fogs around the hill.
 No more the mountain, horrid, vast, sublime,
 Who pours a sweep of rivers from his sides,
 And high between contending kingdoms rears
 The rocky long division, fills the view

690-1. Perfection gives to the *turgent film* (the swelling skin) a whitish and moist appearance, here denominated *living dew*, probably, as being the result of organic action.

695. *Autumnal prime* : The first or choicest fruit of Autumn.

697. *Crushing swain* : The hardy man whose business it was to crush the grapes and express the juice.

With great variety ; but in a night
 Of gathering vapor, from the baffled sense,
 Sinks dark and dreary. Thence expanding far,
 The huge dusk, gradual, swallows up the plain ;
 Vanish the woods ; the dim-seen river seems
 Sullen and slow, to roll the misty wave.

715

E'en in the height of noon oppress'd, the sun
 Sheds weak and blunt his wide-refracted ray ;
 Whence glaring oft, with many a broaden'd orb,
 He frights the nations. Indistinct on earth,
 Seen through the turbid air, beyond the life
 Objects appear ; and, wilder'd, o'er the waste
 The shepherd stalks gigantic. Till at last
 Wreathed dun around, in deeper circles still
 Successive closing, sits the general fog,
 Unbounded o'er the world ; and, mingling thick,
 A formless gray confusion covers all.●

720

As when of old (so sung the Hebrew Bard)
 Light, uncollected, through the chaos urged
 Its infant way ; nor order yet had drawn
 His lovely train from out the dubious gloom.

730

These roving mists that constant now begin
 To smoke along the hilly country, these,
 With weighty rains, and melted Alpine snows,
 The mountain cisterns fill, those ample stores
 Of water, scooped among the hollow rocks ;
 Whence gush the streams, the ceaseless fountains play,
 And their unfailing wealth the rivers draw.

735

740

Some sages say, that, where the numerous wave
 Forever lashes the resounding shore,
 Drill'd through the sandy stratum, every way,
 The waters with the sandy stratum rise ;
 Amid whose angles infinitely strain'd,

745

They joyful leave their jaggy salts behind,
And clear and sweeten as they soak along.

Nor stops the restless fluid, mounting still,

➤ Though oft amidst th' irriguous vale it springs ;

But to the mountain courted by the sand,

That leads it darkling on in faithful maze,

Far from the parent main, it boils again

Fresh into day ; and all the glittering hill

Is bright with spouting rills. But hence this vain

750

➤ Amusive dream ! why should the waters love

To take so far a journey to the hills,

When the sweet valleys offer to their toil

Inviting quiet and a nearer bed ?

Or, if by blind ambition led astray,

They must aspire ; why should they sudden stop

760

Among the broken mountain's rushy dells,

And, ere they gain its highest peak, desert

Th' attractive sand that charm'd their course so long ?

Besides, the hard agglomerating salts,

The spoil of ages, would impervious choke

765

Their secret channels ; or, by slow degrees,

High as the hills protrude the swelling vales,

Old Ocean too, suck'd through the porous globe,

➤ Had long ere now forsook his horrid bed,

And brought Deucalion's watery times again.

770

Say then, where lurk the vast eternal springs,

That, like creating Nature, lie conceal'd

From mortal eye, yet with their lavish stores

Refresh the globe and all its joyous tribes ?

770. *Deucalion* was a Thessalian prince in the fabulous period of ancient Greece, in whose time a deluge is said to have occurred, against which he and his wife were provided for by an ark, in which they remained safely until the deluge ceased. It is supposed by some that the tradition of the Noachian deluge, recorded in the Scriptures, became the basis of some versions of this story of Deucalion.

O thou pervading Genius, given to man,
To trace the secrets of the dark abyss,
O, lay the mountains bare ! and wide display
Their hidden structure to th' astonish'd view !
Strip from the branching Alps their piny load ;

775

The huge incumbrance of horrific woods

780

From Asian Taurus, from Imaus stretch'd
Athwart the roving Tartar's sullen bounds !
Give opening Hemus to my searching eye,
And high Olympus pouring many a stream !

O, from the sounding summits of the north,
The Dorfrine hills, through Scandinavia roll'd
To farthest Lapland and the frozen main ;

785

From lofty Caucasus, far seen by those
Who in the Caspian and black Euxine toil ;
From cold Riphean rocks, which the wild Russ
Believes the stony girdle of the world ;

790

781. *Asian Taurus*: A chain of mountains extending from near the western shore of the Archipelago to the river Euphrates. The *Imaus* is a continuation of the former range, and answers to the modern Himalaya.

783. *Hemus* is a chain of high mountains reaching 500 miles—from the Gulf of Venice to the Euxine, or Black Sea. Its modern name is *Balcan*.

784. *Olympus*: A range separating Thessaly from Macedonia. The name is chiefly applied to one of its highest peaks, and that by the Greek poets was assigned to the gods as their abode. It seems to rise from the sea, and hide its lofty and snowy head among the clouds.

786. *Dorfrine hills*: The range of mountains separating Norway from Sweden, both of which countries and the adjacent countries were anciently comprehended in the name of *Scandinavia*. The more modern name of this range, or rather of a part of it, is *Dofrafjord*.

788. *Caucasus* is a chain of mountains beginning at the mouth of the Cuban, in the Black Sea, and reaching to the mouth of the Kur, in the Caspian. Its tops are always covered with snow : the lower parts abound in honey, corn, wine, gum, fruits, hogs, and horned cattle. This range of mountains is occupied by seven distinct nations, each speaking a different language. Those best known are the Circassians and the Georgians.

790. The Russians formerly called the *Riphean Mountains Weliki Camenypays* ; that is, *The Great Stony Girdle*, supposing that they encompassed the entire globe.

And all the dreadful mountains, wrapp'd in storm,
 Whence wide Siberia draws her lonely floods ;
 O, sweep th' eternal snows ! Hung o'er the deep,

795

That ever works beneath his sounding base,
 Bid Atlas, propping Heaven, as poets feign,
 His subterranean wonders spread ! Unveil
 The miny caverns, blazing on the day,

Of Abyssinia's cloud-compelling cliffs,
 And of the bending Mountains of the Moon !

800

O'ertopping all these giant sons of earth,
 Let the dire Andes, from the radiant line
 Stretch'd to the stormy seas that thunder round
 The southern pole, their hideous deeps unfold !
 Amazing scene ! behold ! the glooms disclose ;

805

I see the rivers in their infant beds !

Deep, deep I hear them laboring to get free.
 I see the leaning strata, artful ranged,
 The gaping fissures to receive the rains,
 The melting snows, and ever-dripping fogs.

810

Strew'd bibulous above I see the sands,
 The pebbly gravel next, the layers then
 Of mingled moulds, of more retentive earths,
 The gutter'd rocks and mazy-running clefts ;
 That, while the stealing moisture they transmit,
 Retard its motion and forbid its waste.
 Beneath th' incessant weeping of these drains,
 I see the rocky siphons stretch'd immense,
 The mighty reservoirs of harden'd chalk,

815

796. *Atlas*, in northern Africa.

798. *Cloud-compelling* : Cloud-collecting.

800. The *Mountains of the Moon* are loftier than *Atlas*, and extend from Western Africa through Abyssinia to the Indian Ocean. Thomson, however, evidently considers them as not extending so far east as Abyssinia.

811. *Bibulous* : The sands and pebbly gravel are thus described from the property which they have of absorbing, or *drinking in*, moisture.

- Or stiff compacted clay, capacious form'd. 820
 O'erflowing thence, the congregated stores,
 The crystal treasures of the liquid world,
 Through the stirr'd sands a bubbling passage burst,
 And welling out, around the middle steep,
 Or from the bottoms of the bosom'd hills, 825
 In pure effusion flow. United, thus,
 Th' exhaling sun, the vapor-burden'd air,
 The gelid mountains, that to rain condensed
 These vapors in continual current draw,
 And send them, o'er the fair-divided earth, 830
 In bounteous rivers to the deep again,
 A social commerce hold, and firm support
 The full adjusted harmony of things.

MIGRATION OF BIRDS TO WARMER CLIMATES.

- When Autumn scatters his departing gleams,
 Warn'd of approaching Winter, gather'd, play 835
 The swallow-people ; and toss'd wide around,

833. *Adjusted harmony of things* : Dr. Buckland, in his Inaugural Lecture, observes :—In the whole machinery of springs and rivers, and in the apparatus that is kept in action for their duration, through the instrumentality of a system of curiously constructed hills and valleys, receiving their supply *occasionally* from the rains of heaven, and treasuring it up in their everlasting storehouses, to be dispensed *perpetually*, by thousands of never-failing fountains, we see a provision not less striking than it is important. So, also, in the adjustment of the relative quantities of sea and land, in such due proportions as to supply the earth by constant evaporation, without diminishing the waters of the ocean ; and in the appointment of the atmosphere to be the vehicle of this wonderful and unceasing circulation ; and thus separating these waters from their native salt (which, though of the highest utility to preserve the purity of the sea, renders them unfit for the support of terrestrial animals, or vegetables), and transmitting them in genial showers to scatter fertility over the earth, and maintain the never-failing reservoirs of those springs and rivers by which they are again returned to mix with their parent ocean ; in all these circumstances, we find such evidence of nicely balanced adaptation of means

O'er the calm sky, in convolution swift,
 The feather'd eddy floats ; rejoicing once,
 Ere to their wintry slumbers they retire ;
 In clusters clung, beneath the mouldering bank, 840
 And where, unpierced by frost, the cavern sweats.
 Or rather into warmer climes convey'd,
 With other kindred birds of season, there
 They twitter cheerful, till the vernal months
 Invite them welcome back : for, thronging, now 845
 Innumerable wings are in commotion all.

Where the Rhine loses his majestic force
 In Belgian plains, won from the raging deep
 By diligence amazing, and the strong,
 Unconquerable hand of liberty ; 850
 The stork-assembly meets ; for many a day,
 Consulting deep, and various, ere they take
 Their arduous voyage through the liquid sky.
 And now their route design'd, their leaders chose,
 Their tribes adjusted, clean'd their vigorous wings, 855
 And many a circle, many a short essay,
 Wheel'd round and round, in congregation full
 The figured flight ascends ; and, riding high
 Th' aerial billows, mixes with the clouds.

to ends, of wise foresight, and benevolent intention, and infinite power, that he must be blind indeed, who refuses to recognize in them proofs of the most exalted attributes of the Creator.

848. *Won from the raging deep* : Not only the Belgian plains, but those of Holland also, are considerably below the surface of the ocean, which is kept back by immense dikes, or mounds of earth, from twenty to thirty feet high and as many in breadth, erected by the energetic freemen of those countries. Were it not for these dikes, a great part of the country would be overflowed by the tides. The keeping up of these dikes employs annually more men than the corn of Holland can maintain. Goodrich informs us that these dikes are built of clay, faced on the land side with wood and stone, and towards the sea with mats of rushes and seaweed. In North Holland during violent storms, the outsides of the dikes are covered with sail-cloth. The utmost effort is necessary to prevent the sea from making encroachments upon that low tract of country.

Or where the Northern ocean, in vast whirls,
Boils round the naked, melancholy isles
Of farthest Thulè and th' Atlantic surge
Pours in among the stormy Hebrides ;
Who can recount what transmigrations there
Are annual made ? what nations come and go ?
And how the living clouds on clouds arise ?
Infinite wings ! till all the plume-dark air
And rude resounding shore are one wild cry.

860

865

VIEW OF SCOTLAND FROM THE NORTH.

Here the plain, harmless native his small flock,
And herd diminutive of many hues,
Tends on the little island's verdant swell,
The shepherd's sea-girt reign ; or, to the rocks
Dire clinging, gathers his ovarious food ;
Or sweeps the fishy shore, or treasures up
The plumage, rising full, to form the bed
Of luxury. And here a while the Muse,

870

875

862. *Thulè*: Turn back to "Summer," note 1168.

863. The *Hebrides* lie to the west of Scotland, and are about 200 in number, most of them small and rocky, and barren. They are chiefly remarkable for the number of small lakes which they contain. Heath and moss are the principal vegetable products. The shores of these islands are the resort of incredible multitudes of sea-birds, and the natives engage in the most hazardous sport of catching these birds and securing also their eggs. In the cavities of the beetling crags (says Goodrich) the sea-fowl resort, and the natives, by means of a rope about their middle, overhang precipices nearly a fourth of a mile in height, merely to look over which would disorder any common nerves. Yet the adventurer, with a line of many fathoms, held by several companions above, descends, and disengaging himself from the rope, enters cavities in the rock higher than the arch of any Gothic church. To this dangerous method of procuring eggs as food, Thomson refers, 872-3.

876-91. In Hugh Miller's opinion, there are few things in English poetry finer than the following description, in which Thomson lays at once all Scotland on the canvas.

✓ High hovering o'er the broad cerulean scene,
Sees Caledonia, in romantic view:

Her airy mountains, from the waving main,
Invested with a keen diffusive sky,

880

Breathing the soul acute; her forests huge,
Incult, robust, and tall, by Nature's hand

Planted of old; her azure lakes between,
Pour'd out extensive, and of watery wealth

Full; winding deep, and green, her fertile vales;
With many a cool, translucent, brimming flood,

Wash'd lovely from the Tweed, (pure parent stream,
Whose pastoral banks first heard my Doric reed,

878. *Caledonia* originally comprehended those parts of Scotland that lie north of the Forth and Clyde, but the name has long been used to designate the whole of Scotland.

888. *Whose pastoral banks*, &c.: Banks devoted to the pasturage of sheep. Here Thomson first exerted his powers as a writer of verse, and at the early age of fourteen had so cultivated them as to be able to furnish the following respectable specimen—indeed remarkable, at so early an age:

Now I survey'd my native faculties,
And traced my actions to their teeming source:
Now I explored the universal frame,
Gazed nature through, and with interior light
Conversed with angels and embodied saints
That tread the courts of the Eternal King!
Gladly I would declare in lofty strains
The power of Godhead to the sons of men,
But thought is lost in its immensity:
Imagination wastes its strength in vain,
And Fancy tires and turns within itself,
Struck with the amazing depths of Deity!
Ah, my Lord God! in vain a tender youth,
Unskill'd in arts of deep philosophy,
Attempts to search the bulky mass of matter,
To trace the rules of motion, and pursue
The phantom Time, too subtile for his grasp:
Yet may I from thy most apparent works
Form some idea of their wondrous Author.

It will help us to form an idea of the early influences that operated upon the mind of the young poet, and also to understand the references to the scenery referred to in the text, to quote a paragraph from Allan Cunningham's Life of Thomson.

When Thomson was little more than a year old, his father (a pious and

With, silvan Jed, thy tributary brook,) 890
 To where the north-inflated tempest foams
 O'er Orca's or Betubium's highest peak ;
 Nurse of a people, in misfortune's school
 Train'd up to hardy deeds ; soon visited
 By Learning, when before the Gothic rage
 She took her western flight : a manly race,
 Of unsubmitting spirit, wise, and brave ;
 Who still through bleeding ages struggled hard,
 (As well unhappy Wallace can attest,

890

895

diligent minister of the Church of Scotland) received a call from Ednam (near Kelso), to Southdean on the waters of Jed, in the same county of Roxburgh. From a scene of cultivated beauty, where the ruins of Roxburgh Castle, the magnificent remains of Kelso Abbey, the clear and slow-sliding stream of *Tweed*, and the hurrying current of the *Teviot*, unite with the hills and dales around in forming a landscape of no ordinary beauty, the all but unconscious poet was taken to one of a ruder, yet not, perhaps, less lovely kind. Southdean is truly a pastoral land ; lovely with its green hills, and its blooming heather, while the slender stream of the "crystal *Jed*," winding through the whole, adds a look of life by its moving waters to the upland solitude. In this lonesome though romantic place the poet passed his early years : nor was he insensible, when but a boy, to a scene which his biographer, Lord Buchan, calls a land "full of the elements of natural beauty—wood, water, eminence, and rock, with intermixture of rich and beautiful meadow." Here, as he wandered by himself, he first met the Muse—not the Muse that visited Burns, with a wildly witty grace on her brow, and a tartan kirtle reaching half-leg down ; but such a one as his enthusiastic mother would have loved—a Muse staid, devout, demure ; her looks, in the language of Milton, "commercing with the skies."

891. *Orca* and *Betubium* are, probably, high peaks in the mountains of the north of Scotland—or possibly on some of the Orkney islands (*Or-cades*), where at certain seasons the most furious tempests are common.

898. *Wallace* : Sir William Wallace, one of the most renowned heroes and patriots of modern times. Russell, the historian, thus speaks of him :—"He was of a gigantic stature and endowed with wonderful strength of body ; with invincible fortitude of mind ; with disinterested magnanimity ; with incredible patience, and ability to bear hunger, fatigue, and all the severities of the seasons ; so that he soon acquired, among his desperate associates, that authority to which his virtues so eminently entitled him. Every day brought accounts of his gallant actions (in resistance to English

Great patriot hero ! ill-requited chief !)
 To hold a generous undiminish'd state ;
 Too much in vain ! Hence of unequal bounds
 Impatient, and by tempting glory borne
 O'er every land, for every land their life
 Has flowed profuse, their pierc'ing genius plann'd,
 And swell'd the pomp of peace their faithful toil ;
 As from their own clear north, in radiant streams,
 Bright over Europe bursts the boreal morn.

900

905

AN APPEAL TO SCOTTISH PATRIOTISM.

Oh ! is there not some patriot, in whose power
 That best, that godlike luxury is placed,
 Of blessing thousands, thousands yet unborn,

910

usurpations and cruelties), which were received with no less favor by his countrymen than terror by the enemy." He drove the English from Scotland and recovered the fortresses which they had taken, and pursued the English army into England as far as Durham; was revered by his countrymen and hailed as their deliverer and their Regent. This elevation, though well deserved and fairly won by a self-sacrificing and generous patriotism, unfortunately excited the jealousy of some prominent nobles, created dissensions, and rendered Scotland again a prey to the victorious Edward of England. Wallace remained independent, and greatly annoyed the English; but having been basely betrayed by a professed friend, he was carried, by Edward's order, in chains to London, tried and condemned unjustly as a traitor, executed on Tower-hill, and his body barbarously divided; the parts were placed on different gates of the city.

907. *Boreal morn*: The splendid coruscations of this phenomenon, proceeding from the regions north of Scotland, are here used as a beautiful illustration of the benign and illuminating influence of Scottish mind, and brilliant achievements of Scottish valor, in its various emigrations from a land "*unequal*" in size and resources to the wants, or rather to the enterprise, of its intelligent and industrious inhabitants.

The Aurora Borealis, or Northern Morn, in the islands north of Scotland, is said, for a considerable period of the year, to be equal to the light of a full moon.

908. *Patriot*: Thomson eloquently points out the various methods in which a *godlike luxury* may be experienced by the intelligent patriot, in promoting the welfare and progress of his countrymen.

Through late posterity ? some, large of soul,
 To cheer dejected industry ? to give
 A double harvest to the pining swain ?
 And teach the laboring hand the sweets of toil ?

How, by the finest art, the native robe

915

To weave ; how, white as hyperborean snow,
 To form the lucid lawn ; with venturous oar
 How to dash wide the billow ; nor look on,
 Shamefully passive, while Batavian fleets

Defraud us of the glittering finny swarms,

920

That heave our friths and crowd upon our shores ?

How all-enlivening trade to rouse, and wing
 The prosperous sail, from every growing port,
 Uninjured, round the sea-encircled globe ;

And thus, in soul united as in name,

925

Bid Britain reign the mistress of the deep ?

Yes, there are such. And full on thee, Argyle,
 Her hope, her stay, her darling, and her boast,
 From her first patriots and her heroes sprung,
 Thy fond imploring country turns her eye ;

930

In thee, with all a mother's triumph, sees
 Her every virtue, every grace combined,

917. *Lucid lawn*: The lawn is a fine variety of cambric, which was formerly manufactured (probably in the time of Thonison) by the Flemish exclusively ; but in late years the lawn manufacture in Scotland has been brought to as high perfection as in Flanders.

919. *Batavian fleets*: The shipping of Holland, which the ancient *Batavi* inhabited. The herring fishery on the shores of Scotland is here referred to, in which, at the time the poet wrote, about one hundred thousand fishermen were employed by the Dutch.

927. *Argyle*: The Duke of Argyle, one of the most prominent nobles of Scotland in the reign of George I. He was honored in 1714 with the appointment of commander-in-chief of the royal forces in Scotland to resist the designs of the Pretender, James, to the throne of Great Britain, which his father, James II., had been compelled to abdicate. Argyle displayed great wisdom, patriotism, and valor in the post assigned him, and gained great honor from the success which crowned his measures.

Her genius, wisdom, her engaging turn,
Her pride of honor, and her courage tried,
Calm, and intrepid, in the very throat 935
Of sulphurous war, on Tenier's dreadful field.
Nor less the palm of peace inwreathes thy brow :
For, powerful as thy sword, from thy rich tongue
Persuasion flows, and wins the high debate ; —
While mix'd in thee combine the charm of youth,
The force of manhood, and the depth of age.
Thee, Forbes, too, whom every worth attends,
As truth sincere, as weeping friendship kind ;
Thee, truly generous, and in silence great,
Thy country feels through her reviving arts, 940
Plann'd by thy wisdom, by thy soul inform'd ;
And seldom has she known a friend like thee.

THE WOODS CHANGING COLOR AND LOSING THEIR FOLIAGE.

But see the fading, many color'd woods,
Shade deepening over shade, the country round

942. *Forbes*: Judge Duncan Forbes, of Edinburgh, President of the Court of Sessions, and one of the earliest patrons of Thomson on his literary debut at London.

948. Many colored woods: The graphic description which Prof. Wilson gives of Belle Isle in Autumn deserves a place here as illustrative of the subject:—"There is a slight frost in the air, in the sky, on the lake, and mid-day is as still as midnight. But, though still, it is cheerful. * * * Could you not think that a splendid sunset had fallen in fragments on the isle that is called Beautiful, and set it all a-blaze! The woods are on fire, yet they burn not; beauty subdues while it fosters the flame; and there, as in a many-tented tabernacle, has color pitched his royal residence, and reigns in glory beyond that of any oriental king. What are all the canopies, and balconies, and galleries of human state, all hung with the richest drapery that ever the skill of Art, that wizard, drew forth in gorgeous folds from his enchanted loom, if ideally suspended in the air of imagination, beside the sun-and-storm-stained furniture of these palaces of Autumn framed by the spirit of the season, of her own living umbrage, for his own last delight, ere he move in annual migration, with all his court, to some foreign clime far beyond the seas!"

- Imbrown ; a crowded umbrage, dusk, and dun, 950
 Of every hue, from wan declining green
 To sooty dark. These now the lonesome Muse,
 Low whispering, lead into their leaf-strown walks,
 And give the Season in its latest view.
 Meantime, light shadowing all, a sober calm 955

950-2. Umbrage, dusk, and dun, &c.: Dr. Greenwood, in his edition of Duncan's Seasons, makes the following excellent remarks on this passage : We must remember that the above is a description of the autumnal woods of England, and not of the autumnal forests of New England. Ours are indeed the "many-colored woods," but "a varied umbrage, dusk and dun," are not the words to convey any idea of them. In localities where certain trees predominate, the forest absolutely flames with lights and hues, which have no counterpart in natural scenery, except in those which sometimes tinge the clouds as they gather round the setting sun. It seems as if all the brightest flowers of Spring and Summer had revived again, to be hung upon the forest boughs, and grace the departure of the year; for this glory is but the prelude of death, and the preparation for a funeral. On entering our woods at this season, one might think that he was walking down the aisles of some vast cathedral. The sun shines through the foliage, as through old tinted windows, suffusing the air with warmth, and color, and worship.

The change from the deep Summer green to the splendid variety of Autumn, is sometimes produced in a single night by the silent but all-powerful ministry of frost. But the superior gorgeousness of the foliage is owing not so much to any peculiarity of climate, as to the peculiar character of some of our native trees. Among those which contribute most strikingly to the show, are the maples, and the tupelo, erroneously called hornbeam, the former bringing their vivid yellows and scarlets, and the latter its deep crimson. The wild creeper too, the ivy of our country, though not ivy, festoons the gray rocks and dark stumps with purple and crimson wreaths; and the ferns do their ample share. Individual trees are often objects of great interest in their autumnal dress. It is not uncommon to see the sugar-maple exhibit three distinct colors, yellow, scarlet, and green, at one and the same time, either mingled together, or in separate masses.

The brilliant hues now mentioned are over and above the endless variety of browns which mark the falling season in temperate climates. The display is too bright, perhaps, for the canvas to imitate, but to the lover and observer of nature it is, while it lasts, a constant feast. Presently the brightness grows dim with the shortening days; a dull brown begins to prevail—prevails—the leaves drop; the pageant has passed away.

Fleeces unbounded ether ; whose least wave
 Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
 The gentle current ; while illumined wide,

➤ The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
 And through their lucid veil his soften'd force 960
 Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time,
 For those whom wisdom and whom Nature charm,
 To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
 And soar above this little scene of things ;
 To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet ; 965
 To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
 And woo lone quiet in her silent walks.

Thus solitary, and in pensive guise,
 Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead,
 And through the sadden'd grove, where scarce is heard 970
 One dying strain, to cheer the woodman's toil.
 Happily some widow'd songster pours his plaint,
 Far, in faint warblings, through the tawny copse ;
 While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
 And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late 975
 Swelled all the music of the swarming shades,
 Robb'd of their tuneful souls, now shiv'ring sit
 On the dead tree, a dull despondent flock ;
 With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
 And naught save chattering discord in their note. 980
 O, let not, aim'd from some inhuman eye,
 The gun the music of the coming year

968-85. Having spoken of the tendency of the quiet scenes of Autumn to withdraw from sordid and vicious pursuits all in whose breasts there is any sympathy with Nature and admiration of her charms, the poet presents us a fine picture of his own predilections and pursuits—a valuable though brief specimen of autobiography. It is continued in the description of *Philosophic Melancholy*, under which term he evidently portrays the workings of his own mind and heart (1002-1029); he then proceeds to exhibit more fully the pursuits that attract him most, and which indicate a highly cultivated and philosophic taste (1028-1079).

Destroy ; and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
Lay the weak tribes a miserable prey,
In mingled murder, fluttering on the ground !

985

The pale-descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires ; for now the leaf
Incessant rustles from the mournful grove ;
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,
And slowly circles through the waving air.
But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams ;
Till, choked and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest-walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bleak.
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields ;
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign. E'en what remain'd
Of stronger fruits falls from the naked tree ;
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

990

995

1000

PHILOSOPHIC MELANCHOLY—ITS OPERATIONS AND EFFECTS.

He comes ! he comes ! in every breeze the Power
Of philosophic Melancholy comes !
His near approach the sudden-starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
The soften'd feature, and the beating heart,

1005

1001. The above paragraph is a true and touching picture of the close of Autumn, but not more so than that which our own gifted Bryant has furnished, in the poem beginning with this stanza :—

"The melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere.
Heap'd in the hollows of the grove the wither'd leaves lie dead,
They rustle to the eddying gust and to the rabbit's tread.
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the gloomy day."

Pierced deep with many a virtuous pang, declare
O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes !

Inflames imagination; through the breast
Infuses every tenderness; and far

1010

Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought,
Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such

As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
 Crowd fast into the mind's creative eye.

As fast the correspondent passions rise,
 As varied, and as high: devotion raised

1015

To rapture and divine astonishment;

The love of Nature, unconfined, and, chief,
 Of human race; the large ambitious wish,

To make them bless'd; the sigh for suffering worth

1020

Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn

Of tyrant pride; the fearless, great resolve;

The wonder which the dying patriot draws,

Inspiring glory through remotest time;

The awaken'd throb for virtue and for fame;

1025

The sympathies of love and friendship dear,

With all the social offspring of the heart.

Oh! bear me then to vast embowering shades,

To twilight groves, and visionary vales;

To weeping grottoes, and prophetic glooms;

1030

Where angel forms athwart the solemn dusk

Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep along;

And voices more than human, through the void

Deep sounding, seize th' enthusiastic ear!

PITT AND LORD COBHAM.

Or is this gloom too much? then lead, ye powers, 1035
That o'er the garden and the rural seat

1019. At the commencement of this line, to apprehend the meaning easily, you must supply the first three words of the previous line.

Preside, which shining through the cheerful land

| In countless numbers bless'd Britannia sees ;

| O, lead me to the wide-extended walks,

The fair, majestic paradise of Stowe !

104C

Not Persian Cyrus on Ionia's shore

| E'er saw such silvan scenes ; such various art

| By genius fired, such ardent genius tamed

| By cool judicious art ; that, in the strife,

All-beauteous Nature fears to be undone.

1045

And there, O Pitt, thy country's early boast,

There let me sit beneath the shelter'd slopes,

Or in that Temple where, in future times,

Thou well shalt merit a distinguish'd name ;

And, with thy converse bless'd, catch the last smiles

1050

Of Autumn beaming o'er the yellow woods.

While there with thee th' enchanted round I walk,

The regulated wild, gay fancy then

Will tread in thought the groves of Attic land ;

Will from thy standard taste refine her own,

Correct her pencil to the purest truth

1055

1040. *Stowe*: The seat of Lord Cobham.

1046. *Pitt*: William Pitt, Earl of Chatham (born 1708; died 1778).

He entered the British Parliament at twenty-one years of age, where he subsequently excelled all others in debate. In 1740 he delivered his celebrated speech in reply to Robert Walpole, who had spoken disparagingly of him on account of his youth. His style of oratory (says Chambers) was of the highest class: rapid, vehement, and overpowering; and it was adorned by all the graces of action and delivery. His public conduct was singularly pure and disinterested, considering the venality of the times in which he lived; but as a statesman he was often inconsistent and haughty. His acceptance of a peerage (in 1766) hurt his popularity with the nation, who loved and reverenced him as "the great commoner;" but he still "shook the senate" with the resistless appeals of his eloquence.

He was opposed to the war with America, to the stamp act, and especially to the employment of Indian savages in carrying on the war. His speeches on these topics are familiar.

1048. *Temple*: The Temple of Virtue in Stowe Gardens.

✓ Of Nature, or, the unimpassion'd shades
 Forsaking, raise it to the human mind. —
 Or if hereafter she, with juster hand,
 Shall draw the tragic scene, instruct her thou, 1060
 To mark the varied movements of the heart,
 • What every decent character requires,
 And every passion speaks : O, through her strain
 Breathe thy pathetic eloquence ! that moulds
 Th' attentive senate, charms, persuades, exalts ; 1065
 Of honest zeal th' indignant lightning throws,
 And shakes corruption on her venal throne.
 While thus we talk, and through Elysian vales
 Delighted rove, perhaps a sigh escapes ;
 What pity, Cobham, thou thy verdant files 1070
 Of order'd trees shouldst here inglorious range,
 Instead of squadrons flaming o'er the field,
 And long embattled hosts ! when the proud foe,
 The faithless, vain disturber of mankind,
 Insulting Gaul, has roused the world to war ! 1075
 When keen, once more, within their bounds to press
 Those polish'd robbers, those ambitious slaves,
 The British youth would hail thy wise command,
 Thy temper'd ardor, and thy veteran skill !

gave !
 AUTUMNAL MOONLIGHT, AND METEORIC APPEARANCES.

✓ The western sun withdraws the shorten'd day ; 1080
 And humid evening, gliding o'er the sky,
 In her chill progress, to the ground condensed

1070. *Cobham* : Concerning Lord Cobham it appears from the following lines that his reputation and skill related not to eloquence or statesmanship, as in the former case, but to military affairs.

1075. *Insulting Gaul* : Louis XIV., king of France, who encouraged and aided the Pretender to fight his way to the English throne, in the time of George I.

*note underlines of
the pastel colors*

The vapors throws. Where creeping waters ooze,
Where marshes stagnate, and where rivers wind,
Cluster the rolling fogs, and swim along

1085

The dusky mantled lawn. Meanwhile the moon

Full-orb'd, and breaking through the scatter'd clouds,
Shows her broad visage in the crimson east.

Turn'd to the sun direct her spotted disk,

Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend, 1090
And caverns deep, as optic tube descries,
A smaller earth, gives us his blaze again,
Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day.

Now through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,

Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime. 1095
Wide the pale deluge floats, and streaming mild
O'er the skied mountain to the shadowy vale,
While rocks and floods reflect the quivering gleam,
The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world. 1100

But when, half blotted from the sky, her light,
Fainting, permits the starry fires to burn
With keener lustre through the depth of heaven ;
Or near extinct her deaden'd orb appears,
And scarce appears, of sickly, beamless white ; 1105
Oft in this season, silent from the north

A blaze of meteors shoots. Ensweeping first
The lower skies, they all at once converge
High to the crown of heaven, and all at once
Relapsing quick, as quickly reascend,
And mix and thwart, extinguish and renew,

All ether coursing in a maze of light.

From look to look, contagious through the crowd,
The panic runs, and into wondrous shapes
Th' appearance throws : armies in meet array,
Throng'd with aerial spears and steeds of fire,
Till the long lines of full extended war

1110

1115

In bleeding fight commix'd, the sanguine flood
 Rolls a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heaven.

As thus they scan the visionary scene, 1120

On all sides swells the superstitious din,

Incontinent; and busy phrensy talks

Of blood and battle; cities overturn'd,

And late at night in swallowing earthquake sunk,

Or hideous wrapp'd in fierce ascending flame;

Of sallow famine, inundation, storm;

Of pestilence, and every great distress;

Empires subversed, when ruling fate has struck

The unalterable hour. E'en Nature's self

Is deem'd to totter on the brink of time.

1130

Not so the man of philosophic eye,

And inspect sage: the waving brightness he

Curious surveys, inquisitive to know

The causes and materials, yet unfix'd,

Of this appearance, beautiful and new.

1135

Goal!
THE MOONLESS NIGHT: THE BENIGHTED TRAVELLER.

Now black and deep the night begins to fall,

A shade immense. Sunk in the quenching gloom,

Magnificent and vast, are heaven and earth.

Order confounded lies; all beauty void;

Distinctive lost; and gay variety

1140

One universal blot: such the fair power

Of light, to kindle and create the whole.

Drear is the state of the benighted wretch,

Who then, bewilder'd, wanders through the dark,

Full of pale fancies and chimeras huge;

1145

Nor visited by one directive ray,

From cottage streaming or from airy hall.

Perhaps impatient as he stumbles on,

Struck from the root of slimy rushes, blue,

Digitized by Google

1150

X The wildfire scatters round, or gather'd trails

A length of flame deceitful o'er the moss ;

Whither decoy'd by the fantastic blaze,

Now lost and now renew'd, he sinks absorb'd,

Rider and horse, amid the miry gulf :

While still, from day to day, his pining wife,

1155

And plaintive children his return await,

In wild conjecture lost. At other times,

Sent by the better genius of the night,

Innoxious, gleaming on the horse's mane,

The meteor sits ; and shows the narrow path,

1160

That winding leads through pits of death, or else,

Instructs him how to take the dangerous ford.

The lengthen'd night elapsed, the morning shines

Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,

Unfolding fair the last autumnal day.

1165

And now the mounting sun dispels the fog ;

The rigid hoar-frost melts before his beam ;

And hung on every spray, on every blade

Of grass, the myriad dew-drops twinkle round.

1152. *Fantastic blaze*: Reference is made to what is sometimes called *Ignis Fatuus* (vain or illusive fire)—a kind of luminous meteor (I use the language of Brande) which flies about in the air a little above the surface of the earth, and appears chiefly in marshy places, or near stagnant waters, or in churchyards, during the nights of summer. There are many instances of travellers having been decoyed by these lights into marshy places, where they perished, and hence the names *Jack-with-a-lantern*, *Will-with-a-wisp*; the people ascribing the appearance to the agency of evil spirits, who take this mode of alluring men to their destruction. The cause of the phenomenon does not seem to be perfectly understood; it is generally supposed to be produced by the decomposition of animal or of vegetable matters, or by the evolution of gases which spontaneously inflame in the atmosphere.

Milton thus describes the phenomenon :

“ A wandering fire,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succor far.”

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THE INVADED BEE-HIVE.

- Ah, see where, robb'd and murder'd, in that pit 1170
 Lies the still heaving hive ! at evening snatch'd
 Beneath the cloud of guilt-concealing night,
 And fix'd o'er sulphur ; while, not dreaming ill,
 The happy people in their waxen cells,
 Sat tending public cares, and planning schemes 1175
 Of temperance, for Winter poor ; rejoiced
 To mark, full flowing round, their copious stores.
 Sudden the dark, oppressive steam ascends ;
 And, used to milder scents, the tender race,
 By thousands, tumble from their honied domes. 1180
 Convolved, and agonizing in the dust.
 And was it then for this you roam'd the Spring,
 Intent from flower to flower ? for this you toil'd
 Ceaseless the burning Summer heats away ?
 For this in Autumn search'd the blooming waste, 1185
 Nor lost one sunny gleam ? for this sad fate ?
 O man ! tyrannic lord ! how long, how long
 Shall prostrate Nature groan beneath your rage,
 Awaiting renovation ? When obliged,
 Must you destroy ? Of their ambrosial food 1190
 Can you not borrow ; and in just return
 Afford them shelter from the wintry winds ;
 Or, as the sharp year pinches, with their own
 Again regale them on some smiling day ?
 See where the stony bottom of their town 1195
 Looks desolate and wild ; with here and there —
 A helpless number, who the ruin'd state
 Survive, lamenting weak, cast out to death.
 Thus a proud city, populous and rich,
 Full of the works of peace, and high in joy, 1200
 At theatre or feast, or sunk in sleep,
 (As late, Palermo, was thy fate,) is seized

By some dread earthquake, and convulsive hurl'd,
Sheer from the black foundation, stench-involved,
Into a gulf of blue sulphureous flame.

1205

THE LAST DAY OF AUTUMN.

Hence every harsher sight! for now the day,
O'er heaven and earth diffused, grows warm and high,
Infinite splendor wide investing all.

How still the breeze! save what the filmy threads
Of dew evaporate brushes from the plain.

1210

How clear the cloudless sky! how deeply tinged
With a peculiar blue! th' ethereal arch

How swell'd immense! amid whose azure throned,
The radiant sun how gay! How calm below

The gilded earth! the harvest treasures all

1215

Now gather'd in, beyond the rage of storms,
Sure to the swain; the circling fence shut up;
And instant Winter's utmost rage defied.

While, loose to festive joy, the country round

Laughs with the loud sincerity of mirth,

1220

Shook to the wind their cares. The toil-strung youth,
By the quick sense of music taught alone,

Leaps wildly graceful in the lively dance.

Her every charm abroad, the village toast,

Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich,

1225

Darts not unmeaning looks; and where her eye

1202. *Palermo*: The capital of the island of Sicily, a city of great beauty. Between it and the mountains the country, it is said, is one of the richest plains in the world, the whole appearing a magnificent garden, filled with fruitful trees and watered by fountains and rivulets. It abounds in rich and magnificent church edifices. At various periods it has been injured by earthquakes and inundations.

1224. *The village toast*: That is, the subject of the village toast—a person in honor of whom wine is drank—expressive of a desire for her health and happiness.

Points an approving smile, with double force,
 The cudgel rattles, and the wrestler twines.
 Age too shines out; and, garrulous, recounts
 The feats of youth. Thus they rejoice; nor think 1280
 That, with to-morrow's sun, their annual toil
 Begins again the never ceasing round.

THE PURE PLEASURES OF RURAL LIFE.

✓ X Oh, knew he but his happiness, of men
 The happiest he! who far from public rage, *Augustan - poetical*
 Deep in the vale, with a choice few retired, 1235
 Drinks the pure pleasures of the rural life.
 What though the dome be wanting, whose proud gate,
 Each morning, vomits out the sneaking crowd
 Of flatterers false, and in their turn abused?
 Vile intercourse! What though the glittering robe 1240
 Of every hue reflected light can give,
 Or floating loose, or stiff with mazy gold,
 The pride and gaze of fools! oppress him not?
 What though, from utmost land and sea purvey'd,
 For him each rarer tributary life 1245
 Bleeds not, and his insatiate table heaps
 With luxury, and death? What though his bowl/
 Flames not with costly juice; nor sunk in beds,
 Oft of gay care, he tosses out the night,
 Or melts the thoughtless hours in idle state? 1250
 What though he knows not those fantastic joys,
 That still amuse the wanton, still deceive;
 A face of pleasure, but a heart of pain;
 Their hollow moments undelighted all?
 Sure peace is his; a solid life, estranged 1255
 To disappointment, and fallacious hope;
 Rich in content, in Nature's bounty rich,
 In herbs and fruits. Whatever greens the Spring,

When heaven descends in showers ; or bends the bough
 When Summer reddens, and when Autumn beams ; 1260

Or in the Wintry glebe whatever lies

Conceal'd, and fattens with the richest sap :

These are not wanting ; nor the milky drove,

Luxuriant, spread o'er all the lowing vale ;

Nor bleating mountains ; nor the chide of streams, 1265

And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere

Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade,

Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay.

Nor aught besides of prospect, grove, or song,

Dim grottoes, gleaming lakes, and fountains clear. 1270

Here too dwells simple Truth ; plain Innocence ;

Unsullied Beauty ; sound unbroken Youth,

Patient of labor, with a little pleased ;

Health ever blooming ; unambitious Toil,

Calm Contemplation, and poetic Ease. 1275

21 Let others brave the flood in quest of gain,

And beat, for joyless months, the gloomy wave :

Let such as deem it glory to destroy,

Rush into blood, the sack of cities seek ;

Unpierced, exulting in the widow's wail,

The virgin's shriek, and infant's trembling cry :

Let some, far distant from their native soil,

Urged or by want or harden'd avarice,

Find other lands beneath another sun :

Let this through cities work his eager way,

1285

By legal outrage and establish'd guile,

The social sense extinct ; and that ferment

Mad into tumult the seditious herd,

Or melt them down to slavery : let these

Insnare the wretched in the toils of law,

Fomenting discord, and perplexing right,

An iron race ! and those of fairer front,

But equal inhumanity, in courts,

1290

Delusive pomp, and dark cabals, delight ;
 Wreathè the deep bow, diffuse the lying smile, 1295
 And tread the weary labyrinth of state :—
 While he, from all the stormy passions free
 That restless men involve, hears, and but hears,
 At distance safe, the human tempest roar,
 Wrapp'd close in conscious peace. The fall of kings, 1300
 The rage of nations, and the crush of states,
 Move not the man who, from the world escaped,
 In still retreats, and flowery solitudes,
 To Nature's voice attends, from month to month
 And day to day, through the revolving year : 1305
 Admiring, sees her in her every shape ;
 Feels all her sweet emotions at his heart ;
 Takes what she liberal gives, nor thinks of more.
 He, when young Spring protrudes the bursting gems,
 Marks the first bud, and sucks the healthful gale 1310
 Into his freshen'd soul. Her genial hours
 He full enjoys ; and not a beauty blows,
 And not an opening blossom breathes in vain.
 In Summer he, beneath the living shade,
 Such as o'er frigid Tempè wont to wave, 1315
 Or Hemus cool, reads what the Muse, of these,
 Perhaps, has in immortal numbers sung ;
 Or what she dictates writes : and, oft an eye
 Shot round, rejoices in the vigorous year.
 When Autumn's yellow lustre gilds the world, 1320
 And tempts the sickled swain into the field,
 Seized by the general joy, his heart distends
 With gentle throes ; and, through the tepid gleams
 Deep musing, then he best exerts his song.

1815. *Tempè*: See note on line 906, "Spring."

1816. *Hemus*: Turn to note on 783, "Autumn."

1824. This line would suggest to us that Thomson found the season

Present time

E'en Winter wild, to him is full of bliss.

1825

The mighty tempest, and the hoary waste,
Abrupt and deep, stretch'd o'er the buried earth,
Awake to solemn thought. At night the skies
Disclosed, and kindled by refining frost,
Pour every lustre on th' exalted eye.

1830

A friend, a book, the stealing hours secure,
And mark them down for wisdom. With swift wing,
O'er land and sea imagination roams ;
Or truth, divinely breaking on his mind,
Elates his being, and unfolds his powers ;

1835

Or in his breast heroic virtue burns.

The touch of kindred too and love he feels ;

The modest eye, whose beams on his alone

Ecstatic shine ; the little strong embrace

Of prattling children, twined around his neck,

1840

And emulous to please him, calling forth

The fond parental soul. Nor purpose gay,

Amusement, dance, or song, he sternly scorns ;

For happiness and true philosophy

1845

Are of the social, still, and smiling kind.

This is the life which those who fret in guilt,

And guilty cities, never knew ; the life,

Led by primeval ages, uncorrupt,

When Angels dwelt, and God himself with man !

Oh Nature ! all-sufficient ! over all !

1850

Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works !

Snatch me to heaven. Thy rolling wonders there,

World beyond world, in infinite extent,

Profusely scatter'd o'er the blue immense,

MV

Autumn best adapted to awaken poetic inspiration and to facilitate poetic compositions.

1850. *Nature* : The Author of nature, under this term, is here addressed ; for to Him alone, and not to the universe created by Him and ever dependent on Him, can the language here used be justly applied.

- Show me ; their motions, periods, and their laws, 1355
 Give me to scan ; through the disclosing deep
 Light my blind way. The mineral strata there ;
 Thrust, blooming, thence the vegetable world ;
 ✓ O'er that the rising system, more complex,
 Of animals ; and higher still, the mind, 1360
 The varied scene of quick-compounded thought,
 And where the mixing passions endless shift :
 These ever open to my ravish'd eye ;
 A search the flight of time can ne'er exhaust !
 But if to that unequal ; if the blood, 1365
 In sluggish streams about my heart, forbid
 That best ambition ; under closing shades,
Inglorious, lay me by the lowly brook,
And whisper to my dreams. From Thee begin,
Dwell all on Thee, with Thee conclude my song ; 1370
And let me never, never stray from Thee !

W I N T E R.

WINTER.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

WINTER, directly opposite as it is in other respects to Summer, yet resembles it in this, that it is a season in which Nature is employed rather in secretly preparing for the mighty changes which it successively brings to light, than in the actual exhibition of them. It is, therefore, a period equally barren of events, and has still less of animation than Summer, inasmuch as lethargic insensibility is a state more distant from vital energy than the languor of indolent repose. From the fall of the leaf and withering of the herb, an unvarying death-like torpor oppresses almost the whole vegetable creation, and a considerable part of the animal, during this entire portion of the year. The whole insect race, which filled every part of the Summer landscape with life and motion, are now either buried in profound sleep, or actually no longer exist, except in the unformed rudiments of a future progeny. Many of the birds and quadrupeds are retired to concealments from which not even the calls of hunger can force them; and the rest, intent only on the preservation of a joyless being, have ceased to exert those powers of pleasing, which, at other seasons, so much contribute to their mutual happiness, as well as to the amusement of their human sovereign. Their social connections, however, are improved by their wants. In order the better to procure their scanty subsistence and resist the inclemencies of the sky, they are taught by instinct to assemble in flocks; and this provision has the secondary effect of gratifying the spectator with something of novelty and action even in the dreariness of a winter prospect.

But it is in the extraordinary changes and agitations which the elements and the surrounding atmosphere undergo during this season, that the poet of nature must principally look for relief from the gloomy uniformity reigning through other parts of the creation. Here scenes are presented to his view, which, were they less frequent, must strike with wonder and admiration the most incurious spectator. The effects of cold are more sudden, and in many instances more extraordinary and unexpected, than those of heat. He who has beheld the vegetable products of even a northern summer, will not be greatly amazed at the richer and more luxuriant, but still resembling, growths of the tropics. But one who has always been accustomed to view water in a liquid and colorless state, cannot form the least conception of the same element as hardened into an extensive plain of solid crystal, or covering the ground with a robe of the purest white. The highest possible degree of astonishment must therefore attend the first view of these phenomena: and as in the temperate climate of Britain but a small portion of the year affords these spectacles, we find that even in this island they have novelty enough to excite emotions of agreeable surprise.

But it is not to novelty alone that they owe their charms. Their intrinsic beauty is, perhaps, individually superior to that of the gayest objects presented by the other seasons. Where is the elegance and brilliancy that can compare with that which decorates every tree or bush on the clear morning succeeding a night of hoar frost? or what is the lustre that would not appear dull and tarnished in competition with a field of snow just glazed over with frost? By the vivid description of such objects as these, contrasted with the savage sublimity of storms and tempests, our poet has been able to produce a set of winter landscapes as engaging to the fancy as the apparently happier scenes of genial warmth and verdure.

But he has not trusted entirely to these resources for combating the natural sterility of Winter. Repeating the pleasing artifice of his Summer, he has called in foreign aid, and has

heightened the scenery with grandeur and horror not belonging to Britain. The famished troops of wolves pouring from the Alps; the mountains of snow rolling down the precipices of the same regions; the dreary plains over which the Laplander urges his reindeer; the wonders of the icy sea, and volcanoes "flaming through a waste of snow," are objects judiciously selected from all that Nature presents most singular and striking in the various domains of boreal cold and wintry desolation.

AIKIN.

The general aspect of Winter is forbidding. It is the night of the year; the period when, under a mitigated light, Nature reposes after the active exertions of Spring and Summer have been crowned with the rich stores of Autumn. We now no longer survey with admiration and delight those wonders of creative power which arrested our attention in that youthful season when herbs, plants, and trees awoke from their long sleep and started into new life, under the kindly influences of warmer suns and gentler breezes; and when the feathered tribes made the fresh-clothed woods and lawns, and the blue sky itself, vocal with the music of love and joy. Nor do we now expatiate in the maturer beauties of Summer, when light and heat flushed the glowing heavens and smiling earth, and when the clouds distilled their grateful showers, or tempered the intense radiance by their flitting shade. And mellow Autumn, too, has passed away, along with the merry song of the reapers and the hum of busy men, gathering their stores from the teeming fields.

Instead of these genial influences of heaven, our lengthening nights, and our days becoming perpetually darker and shorter, shed their gloom over the face of nature; the earth grows niggardly of her supplies of nourishment and shelter, and no longer spreads beneath the tenants of the field the soft carpet on which they were accustomed to repose; man seeks his artificial comforts and his hoarded food; the wind whistles ominously through

the naked trees; the dark clouds lower; the chilling rain descends in torrents; and, as the season advances, the earth becomes rigid as if struck by the wand of an enchanter; the waters, spell-bound, lie motionless in crystal chains; the north pours forth its blast, and nature is entombed in a vast cemetery, whiter and colder than Parian marble.

Yet, even in this apparently frightful and inhospitable season, there are means of pleasure and improvement which render it scarcely inferior to any other period of the revolving year; while proofs of the power, wisdom, and goodness of the great Creator are not less abundantly displayed to the mind of the pious inquirer. Nothing, indeed, can be more worthy of admiration than the manner in which the rigors of winter are tempered, so as to contribute to the subsistence and comfort of living beings.

DR. DUNCAN.

Poetry, which though not dead, had long been sleeping in Scotland, was restored to waking life by Thomson. His genius was national; and so, too, was the subject of his first and greatest song. By saying that his genius was national, we mean that its temperament was enthusiastic and passionate; and that, though highly imaginative, the sources of its power lay in the heart. The Castle of Indolence is distinguished by purer taste and finer fancy; but with all its exquisite beauties, that poem is but the vision of a dream. The Seasons are glorious realities; and the charm of the strain that sings the “rolling year” is its truth. But what mean we by saying that the Seasons are a national subject? Do we assert that they are solely Scottish? That would be too bold, even for us; but we scruple not to assert, that Thomson has made them so, as far as might be, without insult, injury, or injustice to the rest of the globe. His suns rise and set in Scottish heavens: his “deep-fermenting tempests, are brewed in grim evening” Scottish skies; Scottish is his

thunder of cloud and cataract; his “vapors, and snows, and storms,” are Scottish; and, strange as the assertion would have sounded in the ears of Samuel Johnson, Scottish are his woods, their sough, and their roar; nor less their stillness, more awful amidst the vast multitude of steady stems, than when all the sullen pine-tops are swinging to the hurricane. A dread love of his native land was in his heart when he cried in the solitude:

“Hail, kindred glooms! congenial horrors hail!”

PROF. WILSON.

Winter.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed.—Address to the Earl of Wilmington.—First approach of Winter.—According to the natural course of the season, various storms described.—Rain.—Wind.—Snow.—The driving of the snows; a man perishing among them; whence reflections on the wants and miseries of human life.—The wolves descending from the Alps and Apennines.—A winter evening described; as spent by philosophers; by the country people; in the city.—Frost.—A view of Winter within the polar circle.—A thaw.—The whole concluding with moral reflections on a future state.

SEE ! WINTER comes to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train ;
Vapors, and clouds, and storms. Be these my theme ;
These, that exalt the soul to solemn thought,

✓ 1-16. Upon this passage Prof. Wilson exclaims :—Divine inspiration indeed ! Poetry, that if read by the bedside of a dying lover of nature, might

“ Create a soul
Under the ribs of death ! ”

To this exclamation, the professor subjoins some admirable strictures upon the assertion of Wordsworth, that the true spirit of the “ Seasons,” till long after their publication, was neither felt nor understood : that the measure of its early popularity was to be attributed to a “ blind wonderment, the natural produce of ignorance,” to the fortunate title which he had selected for his Poem, and to the abundant use of false ornaments of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning, and, further, to the sentimental common-places, which, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty.

And heavenly musing. Welcome, kindred glooms,
 Congenial horrors, hail! With frequent foot,
Pleased have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
When nursed by careless solitude I lived,

substance of the strictures is, that though descriptive poetry may have flourished during the period between *Paradise Lost* and the *Sheep-shearing Song*, mankind, nevertheless, had been in the enjoyment and use of even senses, and could see and hear without the aid of those occultists, the poets; that the shepherds and agriculturists of England and Scotland—the gentlemen and ladies, the king and queen—had been blind and deaf to all the sights and sounds of nature—had not seen the heavens and the earth, until Thomson reminded them of that, as to the *title* of the Poem, Genius and not *Fortune* had set it—that the “Seasons” are not merely the “title” of his poem—*Seasons* are his poem, and his poem is the *Seasons*; further, that he knew little, and cared less about the *Seasons*, as Wordsworth asserts, both the title and the substance of the Poem would have been *unfit* for its popularity: that Thomson, in his *Seasons*, often writes what is taste, is true, but it is not true that he always, or generally, does what many did, do, and will admire the bad or indifferent passages in *Seasons*, won by their false glitter, or common-place sentimentalism—passages for example as the story of Damon and Musidora—is, no doubt, true; but this will not account for the admiration with which the world hailed the “Winter,” the first of the *Seasons* published, which Thomson had not the barbarity to plunge every young lady into the cold bath, nor the ignorance to represent, during such cold weather, any young lady turning her lover sick by the ardor of her looks, or the vehemence of her whole enamored deportment.

Wilson goes on to say:—There is no mystery in the matter—on, a great poet, poured his genius over a subject of universal interest, and the “Seasons,” from that hour to this—then, now, and for ever, have been, are, and will be, loved and admired by all the world. The taste and feelings shown by the collectors of *Elegant Extracts* or as possible, yet Thomson’s countrymen, high and low, rich and poor, have all along not only gloried in his illustrious fame, but have made a very manual of his great work. We have ourselves seen it in the shepherd’s sheiling, and in the woodman’s bower—small, yellow-leaved, old, mean, miserable, calf-skin-bound, smoked copies—yet perused, and pondered over by those humble dwellers, by the winter-ingle summer brae, perhaps with as enlightened, certainly with as高尚的, a delight, as ever enchanted the spirits of the highland highly taught to their splendid copies lying on richly carved and bound in crimson silk or velvet. “The art of seeing” has

✓ And sung of Nature with unceasing joy,
Pleased have I wander'd through your rough domain; 10
 Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;
 Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst;
 Or seen the deep-fermenting tempest brew'd,
 In the grim evening sky. Thus pass'd the time,
 Till through the lucid chambers of the south 15
 Look'd out the joyous Spring, look'd out, and smiled.

ADDRESS TO THE EARL OF WILMINGTON.

To thee, the patron of her first essay,
The Muse, O Wilmington ! renewes her song.

flourished for many centuries in Scotland. Men, women, and children, all look up to her lovely blue or wrathful black skies with a weather-wisdom that keeps growing from the cradle to the grave. In like manner have the people of Scotland, from time immemorial, enjoyed the use of their ears. Even persons somewhat hard of hearing, are not deaf to her waterfalls. In the sublime invocation to Winter, which we have quoted, we hear Thomson recording his own worship of Nature in his boyish days, when he roamed among the hills of his father's parish, far away from the manse.

11. *Myself as pure*: Thomson was religiously educated; his childhood was passed in scenes free from temptation to gross vice; his mind was early turned to the contemplation of the uncorrupting phenomena of physical Nature in her beauty and variety—a healthful and ennobling occupation for the mind and heart; and no doubt in his boyhood he was exempt from outward immoralities; but he was greatly deceived in the favorable estimate here expressed of his moral character at that period, if it be brought to the standard of the divine law, which is "exceeding broad," and, in its searchings, deep and thorough into the human heart. The Bible leads us to a quite different estimate from that here put upon himself.

18. *Wilmington*: Sir Spencer Compton, then speaker of the House of Commons, and afterwards Earl of Wilmington, to whom the second edition of "Winter" was dedicated, bringing to the author a present, from the earl, of twenty guineas. "Winter" was the "first essay" of Thomson's Muse. The lines that follow could not, obviously, have appeared in the first edition, as they refer to other parts of the Poem not then published or even composed. For the first edition of "Winter" the author

Since has she rounded the revolving year ;
 Skimm'd the gay Spring ; on eagle pinions borne, 20
 Attempted through the Summer blaze to rise ;
 Then swept o'er Autumn with the shadowy gale ;
 And now among the Wintry clouds again,
 Roll'd in the doubling storm, she tries to soar ;
 To swell her note with all the rushing winds ; 25
 To suit her sounding cadence to the floods.
 As is her theme, her numbers wildly great :
 Thrice happy could she fill thy judging ear
 With bold description and with manly thought.
 Nor art thou skill'd in awful schemes alone, 30
 And how to make a mighty people thrive ;
 But equal goodness, sound integrity,
 A firm unshaken, uncorrupted soul
 Amid a sliding age, and burning strong
 (Not vainly blazing) for thy country's weal, 35
 A steady spirit regularly free ;
 These, each exalting each, the statesman light
 Into the patriot ; these, the public hope
 And eye to thee converting, bid the Muse
 Record what envy dares not flattery call. 40

THE FIRST APPROACH OF WINTER.

Now when the cheerless empire of the sky
 To Capricorn the Centaur Archer yields,

received but three guineas ; and it remained unsold until Mr. Whately, a gentleman of taste, and an author, discerned its beauties and talked about them in the literary circles he was accustomed to visit.

When fairly brought into public notice, "Winter," we are informed, was universally admired, and its reputation gained for the author the acquaintance of several ladies of rank ; but the most valuable effect of this publication was the friendship of Dr. Thomas Rundle, afterwards Bishop of Derry, by whom his fame was promoted, and an introduction given to Sir Charles, subsequently Lord Chancellor, Talbot, which rendered to the poet very essential service.

And fierce Aquarius stains th' inverted year ;
 Hung o'er the furthest verge of heaven, the sun
 Scarce spreads through ether the dejected day. 45
 Faint are his gleams, and ineffectual shoot
 His struggling rays, in horizontal lines,
 Through the thick air ; as clothed in cloudy storm,
 Weak, wan, and broad, he skirts the southern sky ;
 And, soon descending, to the long, dark night, 50
 Wide shading all, the prostrate world resigns.
 Nor is the night unwish'd ; while vital heat,
 Light, life, and joy the dubious day forsake.
 Meantime, in sable cincture, shadows vast,
 Deep-tinged and damp, and congregated clouds, 55

42. *Capricorn* : The Wild Goat, the first of the Winter signs of the Zodiac, into which the Sun introduces himself on the 21st of December. The one preceding it is Sagittarius, the *Archer*, usually represented on celestial globes and maps by the figure of a *Centaur* shooting an arrow. The Centaur—an animal, half man, half horse—was one of the fabulous creations of the ancient Greeks.

43. *Aquarius* : The Water-bearer, is the Winter sign next to Capricorn. A part of January and of February is occupied by the sun in passing through this sign. During this portion of the year excessive rains fall in the latitude of the countries of Europe and Asia, where the signs of the Zodiac first received their present names. The name of this sign is thus accounted for. Read on (72-105); whence it appears that in Britain also the name of this sign is not inappropriate. Brande (an English author) makes the four seasons of the year to commence, respectively, on the 21st of March, 22d of June, 23d of September, 23d of December, when the sun enters the signs Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn.

Inverted year : The year going backwards, so far as production, growth, or beauty is concerned. Dryden had employed the same expression—

“And winter storms invert the year.”

The retrograding process of nature is *stained*, rendered unseemly, marred, by the falling rains of winter. The *dejected day* (45) expresses the gloomy aspect of the winter day, during the passage of the sun through Aquarius—shedding but little light, because, even at his meridian height, *hung o'er the furthest verge of heaven*; that is, not far above the horizon.

50. *Long night* : In the latitude of Great Britain, between fifteen and sixteen hours long.

And all the vapory turbulence of heaven,
 Involve the face of things. Thus Winter falls,
 A heavy gloom, oppressive o'er the world,
 Through Nature shedding influence malign,
 And rouses up the seeds of dark disease. 60
 The soul of man dies in him, loathing life,
 And black with more than melancholy views.
The cattle droop; and o'er the furrow'd land,
 Fresh from the plough, the dun discolor'd flocks,
 Untended spreading, crop the wholesome root. 65
 Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm:
 And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
 And fractured mountains wild, the brawling brook
 And cave presagful, send a hollow moan, 70
 Resounding long in listening Fancy's ear.

CHEERLESS RAIN-STORM.

Then comes the father of the tempest forth,
 Wrapp'd in black glooms. First, joyless rains obscure
 Drive through the mingling skies with vapor foul;
 Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods, 75
 That grumbling wave below. Th' unsightly plain
 Lies a brown deluge; as the low bent clouds
 Pour flood on flood, yet unexhausted, still
 Combine, and deepening into night, shut up
 The day's fair face. The wanderers of heaven, 80
 Each to his home, retire; save those that love
 To take their pastime in the troubled air,
 Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.
 The cattle from th' untasted fields return,
 And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls; 85
 Or ruminante in the contiguous shade.
 Thither the household, feathery people crowd,

The crested cock, with all his female train,
 Pensive, and dripping ! while the cottage hind
 Hangs o'er th' enlivening blaze, and taleful there
 Recounts his simple frolic. Much he talks,
 And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
 Without, and rattles on his humble roof.

Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swell'd,
 And the mix'd ruin of its banks o'erspread, 90
 At last the roused-up river pours along.
 Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,
 From the rude mountain, and the mossy wild,
 Tumbling through rocks abrupt, and sounding far ;
 Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads,
 Calm, sluggish, silent ; till again, constrain'd
 Between two meeting hills, it bursts away,
 Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream ;
 There gathering triple force, rapid, and deep,
 It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.) 105

WINTER TEMPESTS.

Nature ! great parent ! whose unceasing hand
 Rolls round the Seasons of the changeful year,
 How mighty, how majestic are thy works !
 With what a pleasing dread they swell the soul !
 That sees astonish'd ! and astonish'd sings !
 Ye too, ye winds ! that now begin to blow
 With boisterous sweep, I raise my voice to you.
 Where are your stores, ye powerful beings ! say,
 Where your aerial magazines reserved,
 To swell the brooding terrors of the storm ? 110
 In what far distant region of the sky,
 Hush'd in deep silence, sleep ye when 'tis calm ?
 When from the pallid sky the sun descends,
 With many a spot that o'er his glaring orb

110

115

Uncertain wanders, stain'd ; red, fiery streaks

120

Begin to flush around. The reeling clouds

Stagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet

Which master to obey ; while rising slow,

Blank, in the leaden-color'd east, the moon

Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns.

125

Seen through the turbid, fluctuating air,

The stars obtuse emit a shiver'd ray ;

Or frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloom,

And long behind them trail the whitening blaze.

Snatch'd in short eddies, plays the wither'd leaf ;

130

And on the flood the dancing feather floats.

With broaden'd nostrils to the sky upturn'd,

The conscious heifer snuffs the stormy gale.

E'en as the matron, at her nightly task,

With pensive labor draws the flaxen thread,

135

The wasted taper and the crackling flame

Foretell the blast. But chief the plamy race,

The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.

Retiring from the downs, where all day long

They pick'd their scanty fare, a blackening train

140

Of clamorous rooks thick urge their weary flight,

And seek the closing shelter of the grove.

Assiduous, in his bower, the wailing owl

Plies his sad song. The cormorant on high

139. *Downs*: It is rather uncertain whether the poet by this term denotes the banks of sand washed up on the sea-coast, or the barren and naked, hilly tracts of England devoted to pasturage. As the *rook* is said to live on insects and grubs, the latter is more probably the signification. The rooks (a species of the crow genus) are gregarious birds, building their nests on the same tree, and on contiguous ones ; and after the young birds are fledged they forsake these trees, but return to them in October to roost : in winter they seek shelter in a compact grove, to which the entire flock repairs every night.

144. The *cormorant*, is a voracious sea-raven, frequenting cliffs on the sea-shore, and feeding on fish. The *heron*, or *heron*, is another kind of sea-bird, of the genus *Ardea*, having long legs, long neck and wings, and

- Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land. 145
 Loud shrieks the soaring hern ; and with wild wing
 The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds.
 Ocean, unequal press'd, with broken tide
 And blind commotion heaves ; while from the shore,
 Eat into caverns by the restless wave, 150
 And forest-rustling mountain, comes a voice,
 That solemn sounding bids the world prepare.
 Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,
And hurl the whole precipitated air
Down, in a torrent. On the passive main 155
 Descends the ethereal force, and with strong gust
 Turns from its bottom the discolor'd deep.
 Through the black night that sits immense around,
 Lash'd into foam, the fierce conflicting brine
 Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn. 160
 Meantime the mountain billows, to the clouds
 In dreadful tumult swell'd, surge above surge,
 Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchor'd navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds across the howling waste. 165
Of mighty waters. Now th' inflated wave
 Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
 Into the secret chambers of the deep,
 The wintry Baltic thundering o'er their head.
 Emerging thence again, before the breath 170
 Of full-exerted heaven, they wing their course,
 And dart on distant coasts ; if some sharp rock

subsisting on fish. *Sea-fowl* is a name for all the other varieties of birds that derive their support from the salt water.

159-60. *Fierce conflicting brine, &c.*: The brilliant appearance of the ocean at night when agitated and rough, is at certain times a most magnificent spectacle. The cause is not exactly ascertained. Some suppose it is occasioned by an immense number of animalculæ; others attribute it to electricity.

Or shoal insidious break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.

Nor less at land the loosen'd tempest reigns.

175

The mountain thunders ; and its sturdy sons
Stoop to the bottom of the rocks they shade.
Lone on the midnight steep, and all aghast,
The dark wayfaring stranger breathless toils,
And, often falling, climbs against the blast.

180

Low waves the rooted forest, vex'd, and sheds
What of its tarnish'd honors yet remain ;
Dash'd down, and scatter'd, by the tearing wind's
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.

Thus struggling through the dissipated grove,
The whirling tempest raves along the plain ;
And on the cottage thatch'd, or lordly roof,
Keen fastening, shakes them to the solid base.
Sleep frightened flies ; and round the rocking dome,
For entrance eager, howls the savage blast.

185

Then, too, they say, through all the burden'd air,
Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
That, utter'd by the Demon of the night,
Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.

190

Huge uproar lords it wide. The clouds commix'd
With stars swift gliding sweep along the sky.
All Nature reels. Till Nature's King, who oft
Amid tempestuous darkness dwells alone,
And on the wings of the careering wind
Walks dreadfully serene, commands a calm ;
Then, straight, air, sea, and earth are hush'd at once.

195

As yet 'tis midnight deep. The weary clouds,
Slow meeting, mingle into solid gloom.
Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep,

193. *Demon of the night* : A mere creation of fancy or superstition—a being supposed to preside in the storm, and to warn those exposed to its fury.

Let me associate with the serious Night,
And Contemplation, her sedate compeer ;
Let me shake off th' intrusive cares of day,
And lay the meddling senses all aside.

205

Where now, ye lying vanities of life !

Ye ever tempting, ever cheating train !

210

Where are you now ? and what is your amount ?

Vexation, disappointment, and remorse ;

Sad, sickening thought ! and yet, deluded man,

A scene of crude disjointed visions past,

And broken slumbers, rises still resolved,

215

With new-flush'd hopes, to run the giddy round.

Father of light and life ! thou Good Supreme !

O, teach me what is good ! teach me Thyself !

Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,

From every low pursuit ! and feed my soul

220

With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure ;

Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss !

**SNOW MANTLES THE EARTH : DISTURBS THE COMFORT OF
ANIMALS.**

The keener tempests rise ; and fuming dun
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend ; in whose capacious womb
A vapory deluge lies, to snow congeal'd.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along,
And the sky saddens with the gather'd storm.

225

Through the hush'd air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin wavering ; till at last the flakes
Fall broad and wide and fast, dimming the day

230

217-22. Let every youth commit this admirable prayer to memory, and make a frequent use of it; admirable as far as it goes, though, of course, some supplementary evangelical petitions must be added, to meet fully the actual moral necessities and responsibilities of each one's case.

With a continual flow. The cherish'd fields
 Put on their winter robe of purest white.
 'Tis brightness all ; save where the new snow melts
 Along the mazy current. Low the woods 235
 Bow their hoar head ; and ere the languid sun
 Faint from the west emits his evening ray,
 Earth's universal face, deep hid, and chill,
 Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
 The works of man. Drooping, the laborer-ox 240
 Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and then demands
 The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,

232-5. Prof. Wilson, in his "Winter Rhapsody," has some exquisite remarks upon this and contiguous passages relating to snow, and to the genius of the author as therein displayed. Of the passage here quoted, he says—"Nothing can be more vivid. 'Tis of the nature of an ocular spectrum." So, on 256-7, he observes:—"Here is a touch like one of Cowper's. Note the beauty of the epithet 'brown,' where all that is motionless is white.

‘The foodless wilds
 Pour forth their *brown* inhabitants.’

That one word proves the poet." He then adds:—"The entire description, from which these two passages are selected from memory, is admirable—except in one or two places where Thomson seems to have striven to be strongly pathetic, and where he seems to us to have overshot his mark, and to have ceased to be perfectly natural. Thus, in 240-2, *Drooping the ox*, &c. : the image of the ox is as good as possible. We see him, and could paint him in oils. But, to our mind, the notion of his 'demanding the fruit of all his toils'—to which we freely acknowledge the worthy animal was well entitled—sounds, as it is here expressed, rather fantastical. Call it doubtful—for Jemmy was never utterly in the wrong in any sentiment. Again (261-3), *The bleating kind*, &c. : the second line (262) is perfect; but the Ettrick Shepherd agreed with us, that the third was not quite perfect. Sheep, he agreed with us, do not deliver themselves up to despair in any circumstances; and here Thomson transferred what would have been his own feeling in a corresponding condition, to animals who dreadlessly follow their instincts. Thomson redeems himself in what immediately succeeds (263-4)—*then, sad dispersed*, &c. For, as they disperse, they do look very sad—and no doubt are so—but had they been in despair, they would not so readily, and constantly, and uniformly, and successfully, have taken to the digging—but whole flocks had perished."

Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,

245

The red-breast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets, leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half afraid, he first

250

Against the window beats ; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth ; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is ;
Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds,
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares, and dogs,
And more un pitying men, the garden seeks,

255

Urged on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the bleak heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair ; then, sad dispersed,
Dig for the wither'd herb through heaps of snow.

260

Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind ; 265
Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens.
With food at will ; lodge them below the storm,
And watch them strict : for from the bellowing east,

246. *Household gods* : An allusion to the superstition of the ancient Romans, who imagined that there were superior beings, or deities, who had charge of their respective households and of household operations. These were called *Penates*, and were worshipped within the dwelling. Some of these gods bore the name of *Lares*, who were probably regarded as the souls of the deceased ancestors of the family. The phrase *Sacred to the household gods*, when stripped of its Pagan dress, means *sacred to the family circle*—devoted to its gratification, and enjoying its love and protection.

268–275. These lines (says Prof. Wilson) are a glorious example of the

In this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
 Sweeps up the burden of whole wintry plains
 At one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
 Hid in the hollow of two neighboring hills,
 The billowy tempest whelms ; till, upward urged,
 The valley to a shining mountain swells,
 Tipp'd with a wreath high curling in the sky. 275

THE COTTAGER PERISHING IN A SNOW-STORM.

As thus the snows arise ; and foul, and fierce,
 All Winter drives along the darken'd air ;
 In his own loose revolving fields, the swain
 Disaster'd stands ; sees other hills ascend,
 Of unknown joyless brow ; and other scenes, 280

sweeping style of description which characterized the genius of this sublime poet. Well might the bard, with such a snow-storm in his imagination, when telling the shepherds to be kind to their helpless charge, address them in language which, in an ordinary mood, would have been bombast. "Shepherds," says he, "baffle the raging year!" How ! why merely by filling their pens with food. But the whirlwind was up—

"Far off its coming *groan'd*,"

and the poet was inspired. Had he not been so, he had not cried, "Baffle the raging year;" and if you be not so, you will think it a most absurd expression.

276-321. Here is a passage (says Prof. Wilson) which will live forever; in which not one word could be altered for the better—not one omitted but for the worse—not one added that would not be superfluous—a passage which proves that fiction is not the soul of poetry, but truth—but then such truth as was never spoken before on the same subject—such truth as shows that while Thomson was a person of the strictest veracity, yet was he very far indeed from being a matter-of-fact man.

278-9. *The swain, &c.* : The pastoral solitudes in which Thomson was reared, if not born, told him that, in the season of snow, the fowls of the air were not the sole sufferers, for that man, in the care of his flocks, was often smothered in the drift, or chilled to death on the barren hills. This was evidently in his mind when he wrote of the peasant perishing in the snow. It has all the marks of reality, and forms one of the most moving pictures of the season.—C.

Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain :

Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid

Beneath the formless wild ; but wanders on

From hill to dale, still more and more astray ;

Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps.

285

Stung with the thoughts of home, the thoughts of home

Rush on his nerves, and call their vigor forth

In many a vain attempt. (How sinks his soul !

What black despair, what horror fills his heart ;

When for the dusky spot, which fancy feign'd

290

His tufted cottage rising through the snow,

He meets the roughness of the middle waste,

Far from the track and bless'd abode of man !

While round him night resistless closes fast,

And every tempest, howling o'er his head,

295

Renders the savage wilderness more wild.

Then throng the busy shapes into his mind

Of cover'd pits, unfathomably deep,

A dire descent ! beyond the power of frost !

Of faithless bogs ; of precipices huge,

300

Smoothed up with snow ; and, what is land, unknown,

What water, of the still unfrozen spring,

In the loose marsh or solitary lake,

Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.

These check his fearful steps ; and down he sinks

305

Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,

Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,

Mix'd with the tender anguish Nature shoots

Through the wrung bosom of the dying man,

His wife, his children, and his friends unseen.,

310

In vain for him th' officious wife prepares

The firé fair-blazing, and the vestment warm ;

In vain his little children, peeping out

Into the mingling storm, demand their sire,

With tears of artless innocence. Alas !

Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
 Nor friends, nor sacred home. On every nerve
 The deadly Winter seizes; shuts up sense;
 And o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
 Lays him along the snows, a stiffen'd corse,
 Stretch'd out, and bleaching in the northern blast.

320

REFLECTIONS ON HUMAN POVERTY AND WRETCHEDNESS.

Ah! little think the gay, licentious proud,
 Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround;
 They who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
 And wanton, often cruel, riot waste;

325

Ah! little think they, while they dance along,
 How many feel, this very moment, death,
 And all the sad variety of pain:

How many sink in the devouring flood,
 Or more devouring flame; how many bleed,
 By shameful variance betwixt man and man:
 How many pine in want, and dungeon glooms;
 Shut from the common air, and common use
 Of their own limbs: how many drink the cup
 Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread

330

Of misery: sore pierced by wintry winds,
 How many shrink into the sordid hut
 Of cheerless poverty: how many shake

335

With all the fiercer tortures of the mind,
 Unbounded passion, madness, guilt, remorse;

340

Whence tumbled headlong from the height of life,
 They furnish matter for the tragic Muse:

322-375. Here the poet, who never omits an opportunity of reading a high moral lesson to mankind, reminds the proud and the affluent how many of their fellow-men at that moment are suffering all varieties of woe—want, cold, and hunger—how many in the city prison or in the humble hut, who have claims on their compassion or on their justice.—C.

E'en in the vale, where Wisdom loves to dwell,
 With Friendship, Peace, and Contemplation join'd,
 How many, rack'd with honest passions, droop 345
 In deep retired distress : how many stand
 Around the death-bed of their dearest friends,
 And point the parting anguish. Thought fond man
 Of these, and all the thousand nameless ills,
 That one incessant struggle render life, 350
 One scene of toil, of suffering, and of fate ;
 Vice in his high career would stand appall'd,
 And heedless, rambling Impulse learn to think ;
 The conscious heart of Charity would warm,
 And her wide wish, Benevolence dilate ; 355
 The social tear would rise, the social sigh,
 And into clear perfection, gradual bliss,
 Refining still, the social passions work.

CRUELTIES OF A BRITISH PRISON IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

And here can I forget the generous band,
 Who, touch'd with human woe, redressive search'd 360
 Into the horrors of the gloomy jail ;
 Unpitied, and unheard, where Misery moans ;

342. *Tragic Muse*: the Muse presiding over tragedy, or, without a figure, the writer of tragedy—the province of which is to depict important actions, scenes of strong passion, and of melancholy interest and issues.

359. *Generous band*: the Jail Committee in the year 1729. In 1778 the celebrated John Howard, of England, commenced his philanthropic and extensive explorations of European prisons—made known their deplorable cruelties and wrongs—awakened public sympathy and exertions in behalf of their wretched inmates—and secured most valuable changes in the entire system of prison discipline and accommodations. In the prosecution of this benevolent and arduous undertaking he expended thirty thousand pounds of his own income, travelled about sixty thousand miles, and endured an amount of fatigue, labor, exposure of health, and sacrifice of the comforts of home and of native country, which is almost incredible, and finally he lost his life by a fever which he contracted in visiting a Russian prison in the year 1790.

Where Sickness pines ; where Thirst and Hunger burn,
 And poor Misfortune feels the lash of Vice ?
 While in the land of Liberty, the land 365
 Whose every street and public meeting glow
 With open freedom, little tyrants raged ;
 Snatch'd the lean morsel from the starving mouth ;
 Tore from cold wintry limbs the tatter'd weed ;
 E'en robb'd them of the last of comforts, sleep ; 370
 The freeborn Briton to the dungeon chain'd,
 Or, as the lust of cruelty prevail'd,
 At pleasure mark'd him with inglorious stripes ;
 And crush'd out lives, by secret, barbarous ways,
 That for their country would have toil'd or bled. 375
 O great design ! if executed well,
 With patient care, and wisdom-temper'd zeal.
 Ye sons of Mercy ! yet resume the search ;
 Drag forth the regal monsters into light.
 Wrench from their hands Oppression's iron rod, 380
 And bid the cruel feel the pains they give.
 Much still untouched remains ; in this rank age,
 Much is the patriot's weeding hand required.
 The toils of law, (what dark insidious men
 Have cumbrous added to perplex the truth, 385
 And lengthen simple justice into trade,)
 How glorious were the day that saw these broke,
 And every man within the reach of right !

WOLVES DESCENDING FROM THE ALPS AND APENNINES.

By wintry famine roused, from all the tract
 Of horrid mountains, which the shining Alps,
 And wavy Apennine, and Pyrenees, 390

889-413. To this passage, or rather, to a portion of it, Prof. Wilson has applied some severity of criticism. According to him, the first fifteen lines are equal to any thing in the whole range of English descriptive poetry :

Branch out stupendous into distant lands ;
 Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave !
 Burning for blood ! bony, and gaunt, and grim !
 Assembling wolves in raging troops descend ;
 And, pouring o'er the country, bear along
 Keen as the north-wind sweeps the glossy snow.
 All is their prize. They fasten on the steed,
 Press him to earth, and pierce his mighty heart.

Exallat Rhythm

395 *4th*

but the last ten (404-13) are positively bad; and for these reasons:— Wild beasts do not like the look of the human eye; they think us ugly customers; and sometimes stand shilly-shallying in our presence, in an awkward but alarming attitude, of hunger mixed with fear. A single wolf seldom or never attacks a man. He cannot stand the face. But a person would need to have a godlike face indeed to terrify therewith an army of wolves some thousands strong. It would be the height of presumption in any man, though beautiful as Moore thought Byron, to attempt it. If so, then

"The godlike face of man avails him not,"

is, under these circumstances, ludicrous. Still more so is the trash about beauty, force divine! It is too much to expect of an army of wolves ten thousand strong, and "hungry as the grave," that they should all fall down on their knees before a sweet morsel of flesh and blood, merely because the young lady was so beautiful that she might have sat to Sir Thomas Lawrence for a frontispiece to Mr. Watts' Souvenir. 'Tis all stuff, too, about the generous lion standing in softened gaze at beauty's bright glance. True, he has been known to look with a certain sort of soft surliness upon a pretty Caffre girl, and to walk past without eating her—but simply because, an hour or two before, he had dined on a Hottentot Venus. The secret lay not in his heart, but in his stomach. Still the notion is a popular one.

Famished wolves *howking* up the dead is a dreadful image—but "*inhuman to relate*" is not an expression heavily laden with meaning; and the sudden, abrupt, violent, and, as we feel, unnatural introduction of ideas, purely superstitious, at the close, is most revolting, and miserably mars the terrible *truth*.

"Mix'd with foul shades and frightened ghosts, they howl."

Why, pray, are the shades foul, and the ghosts only frightened? And wherein lies the specific difference between a shade and a ghost? Besides, if the ghosts were frightened, which they had good reason to be, why were not they off? We have frequently read of their wandering far from home, on occasions when they had no such excuse to offer.

- Nor can the bull his awful front defend, 400
 Or shake the murdering savages away.
 Rapacious, at the mother's throat they fly,
 And tear the screaming infant from her breast.
 The godlike face of man avails him naught.
 E'en beauty, force divine ! at whose bright glance 405
 The generous lion stands in soften'd gaze,
 Here bleeds, a hapless, undistinguish'd prey.
 But if, apprised of the severe attack,
 The country be shut up, lured by the scent,
 On churchyards drear (inhuman to relate !) 410
 The disappointed prowlers fall, and dig
 The shrouded body from the grave ; o'er which
 Mix'd with foul shades and frightened ghosts, they howl.
 Among those hilly regions, where embraced
 In peaceful vales the happy Grisons dwell ; 415
 Oft, rushing sudden from the loaded cliffs,
 Mountains of snow their gathering terrors roll ;
 From steep to steep, loud thundering down they come,
A wintry waste, in dire commotion all ;
 And herds, and flocks, and travellers, and swains, 420

415. *Grisons* : one of the Swiss cantons. The rivers Rhine and Inn have their source in this part of the Alps. One distinguishing characteristic of the Swiss mountains, says Goodrich, is the Glaciers, which resemble a stormy sea, suddenly congealed and bristling all over with sharp ridges. The Avalanches, or slips of snow, form another peculiar feature in the scenery of this country. There are innumerable valleys entirely desolated, and almost inaccessible to any thing having life, in consequence of these tremendous visitations from the surrounding cliffs. Not only the snow-fields but even mountains themselves occasionally slide down upon the country below. In 1806 a piece of the Rossberg, twice as large as the city of Paris, slipped down at once into the lake of Lowertz and occasioned the most dreadful devastation. Another accident of the same kind occurred in the Lake of Lucerne, in 1801, when eleven persons were drowned at a village on the opposite side of the lake, by the wave raised by the plunge of the falling mass. Switzerland abounds in deep and romantic valleys, many of which are fertile and well-cultivated, and full of wild and picturesque scenery.

And sometimes whole brigades of marching troops,
Or hamlets sleeping in the dead of night,
Are deep beneath the smothering ruin whelm'd.

THE MIGHTY DEAD OF GREECE. X

Now, all amid the rigors of the year,
In the wild depth of Winter, while without 425
The ceaseless winds blow ice, be my retreat
Between the groaning forest and the shore,
Beat by the boundless multitude of waves,
A rural, shelter'd, solitary scene ;
Where ruddy fire and beaming tapers join 430
To cheer the gloom. There studious let me sit,
And hold high converse with the mighty Dead ;
Sages of ancient time, as gods revered,
As gods beneficent, who bless'd mankind
With arts, with arms, and humanized a world. 435
Roused at the inspiring thought, I throw aside
The long-lived volume ; and, deep musing, hail
The sacred shades, that slowly rising pass
Before my wondering eyes. First Socrates,

439. *Socrates*: one of the most distinguished of the philosophers of Athens. He was born 469 B. C. He often served his country with great valor in military expeditions : at sixty years of age, he was a prominent and influential member of the Senate of Five Hundred : he firmly opposed the oppressive measures of the Thirty Tyrants at the hazard of his life : grieved at the kind of philosophical teaching in vogue at Athens, consisting chiefly of refined speculations upon nature and the origin of things, and offended at the sophists for teaching the arts of false eloquence and false reasoning, Socrates originated a new and more practical and useful method of instruction. After this period he spent most of his time in public places, that he might come in contact with large numbers, and benefit them by his lectures and conversation. He was a popular and successful teacher of moral wisdom, and a disinterested and zealous patriot : yet his enemies succeeded in procuring his unjust condemnation to death by poison, when he was in his seventieth year. The last scenes of

Who, firmly good in a corrupted state,
 Against the rage of tyrants single stood,
 Invincible ! calm reason's holy law,
 That Voice of God within th' attentive mind,
 Obeying, fearless, or in life or death :
 Great moral teacher ! wisest of mankind ! —

440

Solon the next, who built his commonweal
 On equity's wide base ; by tender laws
 A lively people curbing, yet undamp'd,
 Preserving still that quick peculiar fire,

445

his life in prison are described with great beauty and pathos by the eloquent Xenophon, his friend and pupil.

446. *Solon* : one of the “seven wise men of Greece,” and a distinguished Athenian lawgiver, but a native of Salamis. After a long course of travel for the sake of obtaining information, he found his country on his return in a deplorable state, divided by contending factions and unable to resist any attacks from abroad. By his poetic talent, and eloquence, and management, he persuaded the Athenians to recover, by force of arms, his native island from the unjust grasp of the state of Megara. He personally aided in the battles which secured its recovery. He set himself most wisely and vigorously to suppress the angry feuds of his fellow-citizens, and to gain their consent to a new organization of the state, which had become necessary, as the government was now wielded by men who made it an instrument of self-aggrandizement and wealth, and of oppressing the great body of the people. He was chosen, by consent of all parties, to mediate between the contending classes, and, with the title of Archon, was appointed to the task of framing a new constitution and a new code of laws, 594 B. C. He secured to every Athenian citizen the right of being judged by his peers and tried by laws to which his own consent had been given. The legislative and judicial powers were intrusted to the people : but the administration of government was placed in the hands of men of property and ability, and this peculiarity furnished a powerful incentive to the industry of the people and to the acquisition of property for the purpose of thereby securing a larger share of political influence. Solon's laws embraced a wide range of subjects—rules of right, maxims of morality, regulations of commerce, and precepts of agriculture. They were conveyed into the Roman jurisprudence about the middle of the fifth century before Christ, and, after an interval of sixteen hundred years, served to abolish the barbarous practices of the Gothic nations, and to introduce justice, security, and refinement, among the modern inhabitants of Europe. Consult Gillies' *Greece*, 162–165.

Whence in the laurel'd field of finer arts,
 And of bold freedom, they unequall'd shone ;
 The pride of smiling Greece and humankind.
 Lycurgus then, who bow'd beneath the force
 Of strictest discipline, severely wise,
 All human passions. Following him, I see,
 As at Thermopylæ he glorious fell,
 The firm devoted Chief, who proved by deeds
 The hardest lesson which the other taught.
 Then Aristides lifts his honest front ;

450

455

453. *Lycurgus*: a Spartan lawgiver, for which station he sought to qualify himself by a journey to Crete and to Egypt, to examine the laws and institutions for which, in that age, those countries were distinguished. He also visited the oriental countries, and in passing through Asia Minor on his return, he found among the Ionians and Æolians the poems of Homer. These he brought home with him, and made them the basis of his legislation, as they contain a large amount of political and moral information, useful for such a purpose. He made some important changes in the constitution of Sparta: he banished wealth and luxury, and, as a means to this, prohibited the use of gold and silver coin and substituted iron in their place. He established public tables at which the people took their frugal meals. From the age of seven years, the Spartan children were educated by the state, and subjected to rigorous discipline, and manly exercises, and self-denials, adapted to make them serviceable warriors in adult years. To give them leisure for martial pursuits, they were not allowed to practise mechanical trades or to follow agricultural pursuits, but these were assigned to the Helots, or slaves. Female children received a careful physical education adapted to secure to their offspring a vigorous constitution. The laws of Sparta were few, and unwritten, and thoroughly committed to memory by the Spartan children.

457. *Chief*: *Leonidas*, a Spartan king and general, who manfully, with a small yet devoted band, ventured to obstruct the march of a vast Persian army into Greece, at the passage of Thermopylæ, leading from Thessaly into Southern Greece. The Spartans were overpowered and, excepting two or three, died on the narrow field of this unequal battle, which took place 480. B. C.

459. *Aristides* and *Themistocles* were rival (464) statesmen. The former (says Keightley) of noble birth, moderate and disinterested in his character, leaned to the aristocratic principle; his rival, of inferior birth (his mother being a foreigner), courted more the people. In integrity and moral dignity of character, he was as inferior to his rival as in birth; but

- Spotless of heart, to whom th' unflattering voice 460
 Of freedom gave the noblest name of Just ;
 In pure majestic poverty revered ;
 Who, e'en his glory to his country's weal
 Submitting, swell'd a haughty Rival's fame.
 Rear'd by his care, of softer ray appears 465
 Cimon sweet-soul'd ; whose genius, rising strong,
 Shook off the load of young debauch ; abroad,
 The scourge of Persian pride ; at home, the friend
 Of every worth and every splendid art ;
 Modest and simple in the pomp of wealth. 470
 Then the last worthies of declining Greece,
 Late call'd to glory, in unequal times,
 Pensive appear. The fair Corinthian boast,
 Timoleon, happy temper ! mild and firm,

his brilliant qualities gained the people, and his influence soon became considerable in the state.

Aristides, who was styled the Just, directed his attention chiefly to the management of the finances, and was more than once chosen Archon. Themistocles sought the more showy station of military command, and turned the attention and efforts of the people to the augmentation of the navy. His influence ere long became so great, that he was able to turn the weapon of *ostracism* against his rival, and Aristides was obliged to go into honorable banishment. With like ingratitude for great services rendered, Themistocles himself, some time afterwards, was treated in a similar manner.

466. *Cimon* distinguished himself by his victorious naval conflicts with the Persian invaders of his country, and with other enemies. His achievements were brilliant, and useful to Athens. In private life he exhibited many virtues. As Gillies remarks, he not only reflected the most distinguished excellencies of his predecessors, but improved and adorned them by an elegant liberality of manners, an indulgent humanity, and candid condescension—virtues which long secured him the affections of his fellow-citizens, while his military talents and authority, always directed by moderation and justice, maintained an absolute ascendant over the allies of the republic.

By his munificence and taste he greatly improved Athens and its environs.

474. *Timoleon*: an eminent Corinthian warrior and statesman. His brother Timophanes, having been raised to the chief command of the

Who wept the brother while the tyrant bled. 475

And, equal to the best, the Theban Pair,
Whose virtues, in heroic concord join'd,
Their country raised to freedom, empire, fame.
He too, with whom Athenian honor sunk,
And left a mass of sordid lees behind,
Phocion the Good ; in public life severe,

480

forces of Corinth for its defence, subjected, with an utter disregard of honor and of justice, the city to his own despotic sway, having put to death many of the principal inhabitants without form of trial. Timoleon was grieved at this treacherous and tyrannical proceeding and expostulated with his brother and urged him to retrace his steps and endeavor to make reparation to the city. The expostulation was treated with disdain. After a few days he brought two other individuals of some note, who then united their earnest entreaties to persuade him to renounce his tyranny, but Timophanes at first sneered at them, and then broke out into a violent passion. At this juncture, Timoleon stepped aside, and stood weeping, with his face covered, while the other two drew their swords and dispatched Timophanes. To this incident Thomson refers.

476. *The Theban pair*: Pelopidas and Epaminondas. The former was brought up in affluence, but with a noble contempt of riches, expended them freely in the relief of the necessitous. Epaminondas was poor, and yet he alone of the Thebans, refused to share in the liberality of his friend. Both were marked by the plainest dress and habits of living : they both devoted themselves to the cultivation of every moral virtue. Pelopidas was peculiarly pleased with corporal exercises and sports : Epaminondas with philosophical studies. Both were admired greatly for that strict and inviolable friendship which was maintained between them from their earliest acquaintance to the end of life, in all the high stations, both military and civil, to which they were exalted. This arose from the fact that, in attending to public duties, they were actuated not by a regard to their own honor and wealth, but by an equal and all-absorbing love of country, which impelled them to avail themselves of the achievements of each other as if they had been their own. See Plutarch's Life of Pelopidas.

481. *Phocion* : an Athenian general, orator, and statesman, born about 400 B. C. He was remarkable (says Anthon), in a corrupt age, for purity and simplicity of character, and, though he erred in his political views, yet in his private relations he certainly deserved the praise of a virtuous and excellent man. In his military capacity he signalized himself on several occasions. As a statesman, however, Phocion seems less deserving of praise. His great error was too strong an attachment to

To virtue still inexorably firm.

But when, beneath his low illustrious roof,

Sweet peace and happy wisdom smooth'd his brow,

Not Friendship softer was, nor Love more kind.

485

And he, the last of old Lycurgus' sons,

The generous victim to that vain attempt,

To save a rotten state, Agis, who saw

E'en Sparta's self to servile avarice sunk.

The two Achaian heroes close the train :

490

Aratus, who awhile relumed the soul

pacific relations with Macedon, a line of policy which brought him into direct collision with Demosthenes, though it subsequently secured for him the favor of Alexander. In this, however, there was nothing corrupt; the principles of Phocion were pure, and his desire for peace was a sincere one; but his great fault was in despairing too readily of his country. Alexander, to testify his regard for Phocion, sent him a present of a hundred talents, which the latter unhesitatingly refused.

As to Phocion, Plutarch says that, when the money was brought to Athens, he asked the bearers of it, why among all the citizens of Athens he had been selected as the recipient of such bounty; "Because," said they, "Alexander looks upon you as the only honest and good man." "Then," said Phocion, "let him permit me always to retain that character, as well as really to be that man."

Plutarch also informs us that Phocion never exerted himself against any man in his private capacity, or considered him as an enemy; but he was inflexibly severe against every man who opposed his motions and designs for the public good. His behavior, in other respects, was liberal, benevolent, and humane; the unfortunate he was always ready to assist, and he pleaded even for his enemy, if he happened to be in danger.

These particulars illustrate the text: we have not space for more, though highly interesting ones might easily be furnished from the pages of Plutarch.

488. *Agis* became king of Sparta, 243 b. c., at a time when the people, through the influence of wealth and luxury, had greatly degenerated from the simplicity, and frugality, and severity of their ancient manners. Agis, a lover and example of the ancient discipline, endeavored to reform existing abuses, and restore the obsolete institutions of Lycurgus. His endeavors were applauded by the people, but opposed by men of property; also by Leonidas, the other king of Sparta, through whose agency he was condemned to death, without a legal trial, and promptly executed.

491. *Aratus* was born at Sicyon, 273 b. c. At the age of twenty he

Of fondly lingering liberty in Greece ;
 And he, her darling as her latest hope,
 The gallant Philopœmen ; who to arms
 Turn'd the luxurious pomp he could not cure ; 495
 Or toiling on his farm, a simple swain ;
 Or, bold and skilful, thundering in the field.

THE GREAT MEN OF ANCIENT ROME.

Of rougher front, a mighty people come !
 A race of heroes ! in those virtuous times
 Which knew no stain, save that with partial flame 500
 Their dearest country they too fondly loved :
 Her better Founder first, the light of Rome,
 Numa, who soften'd her rapacious sons :
 Servius the king, who laid the solid base

liberated his country from the tyranny of Nicocles, and persuaded his fellow-citizens to form with others what was called the Achæan league. He prevailed upon many of the most important states in Southern Greece to become members of the league for their common safety and advantage. He was an ardent patriot and statesman, but of only moderate abilities as a military man.

494. *Philopœmen* was a brave general of the same league. He induced the Spartans to join the league ; afterwards nobly declined to receive a present of one hundred and twenty talents which they offered him ; and, when the Spartans violated the terms of the compact, he, as general of the league, demolished the walls of Sparta, abolished the institutions of Lycurgus, and established in place of these the laws of the Achæans. The league spoken of was destroyed by the Romans, and the territory over which it was spread became, under Mummius, a Roman province.

503. *Numa Pompilius*, called here the *better Founder* of Rome because he gave to it those laws and religious institutions which exerted a happy influence upon the manners and habits of the nation in its infancy. He was the second king of Rome, the first being Romulus.

504. *Servius Tullius*, the sixth king of Rome. He sprung from an obscure origin, greatly modified the character of the Roman government by enlarging the privileges of the plebeians, and diminishing the relative power of the patricians. The new constitution established by his wisdom

On which o'er earth the vast Republic spread.

505

Then the great consuls venerable rise :

The public Father who the private quell'd,

As on the dread tribunal sternly sad :

He, whom his thankless country could not lose,

Camillus, only vengeful to her foes :

510

Fabricius, scioner of all-conquering gold ;

And Cincinnatus, awful from the plough :

Thy willing victim, Carthage, bursting loose

and energy, though not democratic, seems to have prepared the way for the form of a republic which the government of Rome, not long after assumed.

507. *Public Father*: Lucius Junius Brutus, at whose instigation the royal family of the Tarquins was exiled from Rome, the monarchical form of government abolished, and the consular adopted in its stead. As one of the first two consuls, he was obliged to try his own sons for engaging with others in a daring conspiracy to overthrow the consular government, and restore the exiled Tarquins to the throne. They were condemned and executed by the order of their father, who, as one of the fathers of the republic, for its sake *quelled*, suppressed, and overcame the feelings of a *private* father.—After *quell'd* supply *rises*.

510. *Camillus*, after performing many important achievements for the benefit of his country, was unjustly accused of embezzling some of the plunder of the city of Veii, which he had conquered. For this, however, he went into voluntary exile. Upon the invasion of Rome by Brennus, the Gaul, when the capital was in great danger, Camillus was recalled from banishment, and elected Dictator. He forgave the past ingratitude of the people, put himself at the head of the Roman forces, overthrew the Gauls, and made a triumphal entry into the capital amidst the acclamations of a happy people, who honored him with the name of Romulus, and saluted him as the father of his country—a second Founder of the city.

511. *Caius Fabricius*, a Roman consul, was sent by the Senate to Pyrrhus to make terms of peace. On that occasion, learning the poverty of Fabricius, the king urged him to accept a present of gold, as a bribe; but he rejected it with scorn, and thus gained the admiration of the king. On a second embassy to Pyrrhus, the physician of the latter offered to Fabricius, for a bribe, to poison the king, but Fabricius put him in fetters, and sent him back to Pyrrhus, upon whom this noble act produced a deep impression.

512. *Cincinnatus*: See "Spring," note 59.

513. *Victim*: Regulus, a Roman consul and general during the first

From all that pleading Nature could oppose,
 From a whole city's tears, by rigid faith
 Imperious call'd, and honor's dire command :
 Scipio, the gentle chief, humanely brave,
 Who soon the race of spotless glory ran,
 And, warm in youth, to the poetic shade,

515

war with the Carthaginians. He, with five hundred of his countrymen, was taken prisoner. Having remained for several years in prison, he was sent to Rome to ask for an exchange of prisoners, not, however, until he had taken a solemn oath that he would return again if his mission should prove unsuccessful. When he came to Rome (says Anthon) he strongly dissuaded his countrymen against an exchange of prisoners, arguing that such an example would be of fatal consequence to the republic ; that citizens who had so basely surrendered their arms to the enemy were unworthy of the least compassion, and incapable of serving their country ; that, with regard to himself, he was so far advanced in years, that his death ought to be considered as a matter of no importance ; whereas they had in their hands several Carthaginian generals, in the flower of their age, and capable of doing their country great services for many years. It was with difficulty the senate complied with so generous and unexampled a counsel. The illustrious exile therefore left Rome, in order to return to Carthage, unmoved by the sorrow of his friends, or the tears of his wife and children ; and was treated, on his return, according to the ordinary account, with the utmost degree of cruelty, the Carthaginians having heard that their offer had been rejected entirely through the opposition of Regulus.

517. *Scipio* : The family of the Scipios is one of the most distinguished in the annals of Roman bravery and conquests. The one here alluded to seems to have been Paulus *Æmilianus Scipio*, who, for his military successes in Africa, was surnamed *Africanus the Younger*. He was also the conqueror of Numantia in Spain ; but his great popularity was soon terminated by his opposition to Gracchus, a favorite of the people. Being disgusted with the altered state of public feeling towards him, he retired to Cajeta, with his friend Lælius, and devoted himself to literary pursuits and innocent amusements. Lælius was not only the ardent friend of Scipio, but he had studied philosophy with Diogenes the Stoic and Panætius, and delighted in the pursuit of wisdom and virtue. He was also an eminent orator. The friendship of Scipio and Lælius was much admired at Rome, which probably led Cicero, in his dialogue "De Amicitia," to give the name of Lælius to one of the interlocutors. Thus, as Thomson beautifully expresses the fact, did Scipio with *Friendship and Philosophy* retire.

- With friendship and philosophy, retired : 520
 Tully, whose powerful eloquence a while
 Restraine'd the rapid fate of rushing Rome :
 Unconquer'd Cato, virtuous in extreme :
 And, thou, unhappy Brutus, kind of heart,
 Whose steady arm, by awful virtue urged, 525
 Lifted the Roman steel against thy friend.
 Thousands besides the tribute of a verse
 Demand ; but who can count the stars of heaven ?
 Who sing their influence on this lower world ?
 Behold, who yonder comes ! in sober state, 530
 Fair, mild, and strong, as is a vernal sun :
 'Tis Phœbus' self, or else the Mantuan Swain !

521. *Tully* : Marcus Tullius Cicero, one of the greatest orators the world has produced. His matchless eloquence was often employed in the endeavor to prolong the existence and promote the prosperity of the republic. He used it most effectually in crushing the formidable conspiracy of Catiline, for which he was designated the Father and Deliverer of his country. He delivered several orations against Antony the Triumvir. The latter part of his life was devoted to philosophical study and writings. He has been pronounced the greatest master of composition the world has ever seen. He was murdered in his sixty-fourth year at the command of Antony, 43 b. c.

523. *Cato*, usually called *Cato the Censor*, from the remarkable fidelity which he displayed in that office. He often took up arms in defence of his country, and ably served it as consul. He was a great warrior—a man of great sternness, and severity of manners, and of incorruptible integrity and patriotism—the author of that cruel sentiment, resulting, however, from his *exclusive* patriotism, that Carthage must be destroyed—*Præterea censeo Carthaginem esse delendam*. He had none of the gentleness and suavity of Scipio. He was born at Tusculum, 232 b. c.

524. *Brutus* : Marcus Junius Brutus chiefly distinguished himself by the prominent part which he took in the assassination of Julius Cæsar, on the ground that he was aiming at the possession of kingly power. His agency in this matter was the more remarkable, on the score of patriotism, from the fact that Cæsar had manifested special friendship for him, and had elevated him to several posts of honor. Upon the defeat of Brutus on the plains of Philippi, by the forces of Antony and Octavius, he committed suicide—thus copying the memorable but criminal example of his uncle Marcus Cato.

522. *Phœbus* : Apollo—a favorite object of Grecian worship : he was

- Great Homer too appears, of daring wing,
Parent of song ! and equal, by his side,
The British Muse : join'd hand in hand they walk, 535
Darkling, full up the middle steep to fame.
Nor absent are those shades, whose skilful touch
Pathetic drew th' impassion'd heart, and charm'd
Transported Athens with the moral scene ;
Nor those who, tuneful, waked th' enchanting lyre. 540
- First of your kind ! society divine !
Still visit thus my nights, for you reserved,
And mount my soaring soul to thoughts like yours.
Silence, thou lonely power ! the door be thine ;
See on the hallow'd hour that none intrude, 545
Save a few chosen friends, who sometimes deign
To bless my humble roof, with sense refined,
Learning digested well, exalted faith,
Unstudied wit, and humor ever gay.
Or from the Muses' hill with Pope descend, 550

represented, in statuary, in the perfection of manly grace and strength : his brows encircled with a laurel crown, and a bow or lyre in his hands. He was regarded as a patron of poets, and associated with the Muses on Parnassus. The *Mantuan Swain* was the sweet poet of the Augustan age of Rome, author of the Bucolics, Georgics, and *Aeneid*, obtaining the title here given him from his agricultural pursuits, at or near Mantua, in early life. The history of *Homer* is involved in great obscurity ; but he is generally regarded as the author of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that bear his name—the most remarkable productions of any age. *Equal* to him, however, in the judgment of Thomson and of others, was Milton, the *British Muse*, the author of *Paradise Lost* and *Regained*—a most stupendous monument of human genius, learning, and poetic inspiration.

Nor absent from the poet's view (537–40) are those *shades* (departed men) of Greece, who excelled in tragedy and in the ode.

550. *Pope*: Alexander Pope was born in London in 1688, and began very early to write verses, so early that he used to say that he could not remember the time when he began to make verses. He adopted the versification of Dryden as his model. From the age of ten he was a diligent and successful student from love of knowledge and of mental exertion. At fourteen he was quite a proficient in the Latin tongue, and had acquired great smoothness in versification. The next year he rendered

To raise the sacred hour, to bid it smile,
 And with the social spirit warm the heart ?
 For though not sweeter his own Homer sings,
 Yet is his life the more endearing song.

the French and Italian languages quite familiar to his mind. He was a great reader also of the English poets and prose writers, as even his juvenile poems evince. At the age of twenty-seven he was making arrangements for translating into English verse the great poem of Homer, and that translation is pronounced by Dr. Samuel Johnson, to be "the noblest version of poetry which the world has ever seen," and he considers its publication as "one of the great events in the annals of learning." He translated also twelve books of the *Odyssey* of Homer. His political writings are numerous and highly valued. For a critical account of them, Dr. Johnson's memoir of Pope may be consulted.

Thomson, in the text, alludes to the eminence which Pope had reached as a poet when he speaks of his descending from *the Muses' hill*, and while he alludes to the sweet versification of his Homer, he compliments him most highly, by the remark that *his life* is an equally sweet and a *more enduring song*. Bolingbroke, during the last illness of Pope, remarked to Spence that he never in his life knew a man that had so tender a heart for his particular friends, or more general friendship for mankind. Johnson says that in familiar or convivial conversation he did not excel, and that he resembled Dryden, as being not one that was distinguished by vivacity in company. But it seems that he had other qualities of a social and intellectual character that made his society a source of great and peculiar fascination to our author. A slight sketch of these qualities may be found, with other interesting particulars, by referring to note 1426 in "Summer."

The "*humble roof*" in which Thomson entertained his "*chosen friends*" was in Kew-lane, near Richmond, in Surrey, about nine miles southwest from London—a distance he was accustomed frequently to walk with some literary friend. It was a very retired and agreeable retreat; where, for some of the last years of his life, he divided his time between his learned friends and his poetic compositions. In regard to the former, he seems, from the text, to have been wisely select, and to have cultivated the society of those only who contributed to rational improvement and delight, of whom Pope seems to have been most welcome.

His society (we are told by a biographer) was select and distinguished. Pope, Hill, Dr. Armstrong, the Bishop of Derry, Sir Andrew Mitchell, Dr. De La Coru, Mallet, Hammond, Quin, and above all, Mr. George Lyttleton, were his most intimate friends: Pope courted Thomson, and Thomson was always admitted to Pope, whether he had company or not. Collins also seems to have been an associate.

- Where art thou, Hammond ? thou, the darling pride, 555
 The friend and lover of the tuneful throng !
- Ah, why, dear youth, in all the blooming prime
 Of vernal genius, where disclosing fast
 Each active worth, each manly virtue lay,
 Why wert thou ravish'd from our hope so soon ? 560
- What now avails that noble thirst of fame,
 Which stung thy fervent breast ? that treasured store
 Of knowledge, early gain'd ? that eager zeal
 To serve thy country, glowing in the band
 Of youthful patriots, who sustain her name ? 565
- What now, alas ! that life-diffusing charm

Thomson's character (says one) was in every respect consistent with what his writings lead us to expect : he was high-minded, amiable, generous, and humane. Equable in his temper, and affable in his deportment, he was rarely ruffled but by the knowledge of some act of cruelty or injustice ; and as he magnanimously forgave the petty assaults which envy or malignity levelled at him, and stood aloof from the poetical warfare which raged with great heat during some part of his career, he was soon, as if by common consent, respected by all the belligerents.

In the last walk which Thomson took from London to his residence near Richmond, he overheated himself, and imprudently, while in that state, took a boat part of the way to carry him to Kew ; but the chill air of the river gave him a cold, which led to a fever that in a few days terminated his life, in 1748. Collins, the poet, had gone to reside at Richmond for the sake of being near to Thomson, but when the latter died Collins quitted the place in sorrow, and published a touching Elegy, which may be seen in the early part of this volume. Shenstone, the poet, was another friend of Thomson, who, in a letter, professed himself much shocked to hear of the death of a friend, whose society he could so ill afford to relinquish.

555. *James Hammond* seems to have been another of Thomson's select friends, whom he highly eulogizes. According to Dr. Aikin, he was a popular elegiac poet ; was educated at Westminster school, where at an early age he obtained the friendship of several persons of distinction, among whom were Lords Cobham, Chesterfield, and Lyttleton ; was made a member of Parliament in 1741, and died in June, 1742, at the seat of Lord Cobham, at Stowe. An unfortunate passion for a young lady, who was cold to his addresses, is thought to have disordered his mind, and perhaps contributed to his premature death. Hammond was a man of amiable character, and was much regretted by his friends.

Of sprightly wit ? that rapture for the Muse ?
 That heart of friendship, and that soul of joy,
 Which bade with softest light thy virtues smile ?
 Ah ! only show'd, to check our fond pursuits, 570
 - And teach our humble hopes that life is vain !

WINTER EVENING STUDIES AND AMUSEMENTS.



Thus in some deep retirement would I pass
 The Winter glooms, with friends of pliant soul,
 Or blithe, or solemn, as the theme inspired :
 With them would search, if Nature's boundless frame | 575
 Was call'd, late rising from the void of night,
 Or sprung eternal from th' Eternal Mind ; |
 Its life, its laws, its progress, and its end.
 Hence larger prospects of the beauteous whole
 Would, gradual, open on our opening minds ; 580
 And each diffusive harmony unite
 In full perfection, to th' astonish'd eye.
 Then would we try to scan the moral world,
 Which, though to us it seems embroil'd, moves on
 In higher order ; fitted and impell'd 585
 By Wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all
 In general good. The sage historic Muse
 Should next conduct us through the deeps of time ;
 Show us how empire grew, declined, and fell,
 In scatter'd states ; what makes the nations smile, 590
 Improves their soil, and gives them double suns ;
 And why they pine beneath the brightest skies,

584. *Embroil'd* : Confused and irregular.587. *Historic Muse* : Muse presiding over history.591. *Double suns* may here denote double fertility and abundance, as the harvest depends greatly on the sun's heat. Towards the equator the earth produces double harvests each year.



In Nature's richest lap. As thus we talk'd,
Our hearts would burn within us ; would discern
That portion of divinity, that ray

595

Of purest heaven, which lights the public soul
Of patriots and of heroes. But if doom'd,
In powerless humble fortune, to repress
These ardent risings of the kindling soul ;
Then, even superior to ambition, we

600

Would learn the private virtues ; how to glide
Through shades and plains, along the smoothest stream
Of rural life ; or, snatch'd away by hope,
Through the dim spaces of futurity,
With earnest eye anticipate those scenes

605

Of happiness and wonder, where the mind,
In endless growth and infinite ascent,
Rises from state to state, and world to world.
But when with these the serious thought is foil'd,
We, shifting for relief, would play the shapes

610

Of frolic fancy ; and incessant form
Those rapid pictures, that assembled train
Of fleet ideas, never join'd before,
Whence lively wit excites to gay surprise ;
Or folly-painting humor, grave himself,

615

Calls laughter forth, deep shaking every nerve.

Meantime the village rouses up the fire ;

While well attested, and as well believed,

X Heard solemn, goes the goblin story round ;

Till superstitious horror creeps o'er all.

620

Or, frequent in the sounding hall, they wake
The rural gambol. Rustic mirth goes round ;
The simple joke that takes the shepherd's heart,
Easily pleased ; the long loud laugh, sincere ;
The kiss, snatch'd hasty from the sidelong maid,

625

On purpose guardless or pretending sleep ;
The leap, the slap, the haul ; and, shook to notes

Qf native music, the respondent dance.
Thus jocund fleets with them the Winter night.

WINTER EVENING IN THE CITY.

With his friends

The city swarms intense. The public haunt, 630
Full of each theme, and warm with mix'd discourse,
Hums indistinct. The sons of riot flow
Down the loose stream of false enchanted joy
To swift destruction. On the rankled soul
The gaming fury falls; and in one gulf 635
Of total ruin, honor, virtue, peace,
Friends, families, and fortune, headlong sink.
Up springs the dance along the lighted dome,
Mix'd and evolved a thousand sprightly ways.
The glittering court effuses every pomp; 640
The circle deepens; beam'd from gaudy robes,
Tapers, and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes,
A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves:
While, a gay insect in his summer-shine,
The fop, light-fluttering, spreads his mealy wings. 645

Dread o'er the scene the ghost of Hamlet stalks;
Othello rages; poor Monimia mourns;
And Belvidera pours her soul in love.
Terror alarms the breast. The comely tear
Steals o'er the cheek; or else the Comic Muse 650
Holds to the world a picture of itself,
And raises sly the fair impartial laugh.
Sometimes she lifts her strain, and paints the scenes
Of beauteous life; whate'er can deck mankind,
Or charm the heart in generous Bevil show'd. 655

646-9. The author here refers to the characters that figure in several tragedies.

655. *Bevil* is a character in the play of the "Conscious Lovers" by Sir Richard Steele.

O Thou, whose wisdom, solid yet refined,
 Whose patriot virtues, and consummate skill
 To touch the finer springs that move the world,
 Join'd to whate'er the Graces can bestow,

And all Apollo's animating fire,

660

Give thee, with pleasing dignity, to shine
 At once the guardian, ornament, and joy
 Of polish'd life ; permit the rural Muse,

 O Chesterfield, to grace with thee her song !

Here to the shades again she humbly flies,

665

Indulge her fond ambition, in thy train,
 (For every Muse has in thy train a place,)
 To mark thy various, full-accomplish'd mind ;
 To mark that spirit which, with British scorn,

Rejects th' allurements of corrupted power ;

670

That elegant politeness, which excels,

E'en in the judgment of presumptuous France,

The boasted manners of her shining court ;

That wit, the vivid energy of sense,

The truth of Nature, which, with Attic point

675

And kind well-temper'd satire, smoothly keen,

664. *Chesterfield* : Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773), (as Chambers remarks) was an elegant author, though his only popular composition is his "Letters to his Son," a work containing many excellent advices for the cultivation of the mind, and improvement of the external worldly character, but greatly deficient in all the higher points of morality. Lord Chesterfield was an able politician and diplomatist, and an eloquent parliamentary debater. The celebrated "Letters to his Son" were not intended for publication, and did not appear till after his death. Their publication was much to be regretted by every friend of this accomplished, witty, and eloquent peer.

675. *With Attic point* : With point worthy of Attica, or of Athens, its capital. The term *Attic*, from the eminent attainments of its men of literature and art, is applied to any thing peculiarly excellent in literature and art. As Brande observes, the term *Sal Atticum* (Attic salt) was employed by the Romans at once to characterize the poignancy of wit and brilliancy of style peculiar to the Athenian writers, and to designate the liveliness, spirituality, and refined taste of the inhabitants of that city,

Steals through the soul, and without pain corrects.
 Or, rising thence with yet a brighter flame,
 O, let me hail thee on some glorious day,
 When to the listening senate, ardent, crowd 680
 Britannia's sons to hear her pleaded cause.
 Then dress'd by thee, more amiably fair,
 Truth the soft robe of mild persuasion wears.
 Thou to assenting reason givest again
 Her own enlighten'd thoughts; call'd from the heart, 685
 Th' obedient passions on thy voice attend;
 And e'en reluctant party feels a while
 Thy gracious power; as through the varied maze
 Of eloquence, now smooth, now quick, now strong,
 Profound, and clear, you roll the copious flood. 690

THE VARIOUS OPERATIONS AND EFFECTS OF FROST.

To thy loved haunt return, my happy Muse;
 For now, behold, the joyous Winter days.
 Frosty, succeed; and through the blue serene,
 For sight too fine, th' ethereal nitre flies,
 Killing infectious damps, and the spent air 695

which formed the focus and central point of all the eloquence and refinement of the Greeks..

694. *Etherial nitre*: Some of Thomson's notions on subjects of the chemical department are crude and almost unintelligible, though we can readily excuse him on this point, because chemistry, in his day, was almost an unexplored field. His theory, and perhaps that of his times, seems to be, that the air abounded, in the Winter season, with saline particles, called by him nitrous particles, which exerted a beneficial influence upon vegetation, and upon animal health, and growth, and vigor.

Perhaps, however, by *etherial nitre* he only means the element of *frost*, manifesting itself in the material world in a form not unlike the efflorescence, the minute crystallizations of nitre on the surface of the ground, in many parts of the world.

These views are strengthened by looking forward to 714, &c., where he speaks of the *potent energy* of frost as consisting of *myriads of little salts, or hooked, or shaped, like double wedges, &c.*

Storing afresh with elemental life.

Close crowds the shining atmosphere ; and binds
 Our strengthen'd bodies in its cold embrace,
 Constringent ; feeds and animates our blood ;
 Refines our spirits, through the new-strung nerves
 In swifter sallies darting to the brain ;
 Where sits the soul, intense, collected, cool,
 Bright as the skies, and as the season keen.
 All Nature feels the renovating force
 Of Winter, only to the thoughtless eye
 In ruin seen. The frost-concocted glebe
 Draws in abundant vegetable soul, -
 And gathers vigor for the coming year.
 A stronger glow sits on the lively cheek
 Of ruddy fire ; and luculent along
 The purer rivers flow : their sullen deeps,
 Transparent, open to the shepherd's gaze,
And murmur hoarser at the fixing frost.

700

705

710

What art thou, frost ? and whence are thy keen stores

Derived, thou secret, all-invading power,

715

Whom e'en th' illusive fluid cannot fly ?

Is not thy potent energy, unseen,

Myriads of little salts, or hook'd, or shaped

Like double wedges, and diffused immense

Through water, earth, and ether ? Hence, at eve,

720

Steam'd eager from the red horizon round,

With the fierce rage of Winter deep suffused,

(An icy gale, oft shifting, o'er the pool

Breathes a blue film, and in its mid career

697. *Close crowds, &c* : Renders the atmosphere more dense and heavy.

723-5. *An icy gale, &c* : Upon this and a contiguous passage, relating to the operations of frost, let us attend to some pleasant remarks of Prof. Wilson :—Did you ever see water beginning to change itself into ice ? Yes. Then try to describe the sight. Success in that trial will prove you a poet. People do not prove themselves poets only by writing long

Arrests the bickering stream.) The loosen'd ice,
 Let down the flood, and half dissolved by day,
 Rustles no more; but to the sedgy bank
 Fast grows, or gathers round the pointed stone,
 A crystal pavement, by the breath of heaven
 Cemented firm; till, seized from shore to shore,
 The whole imprison'd river growls below,
 Loud rings the frozen earth, and hard reflects
 A double noise; while, at his evening watch,
 The village dog deters the nightly thief;
 The heifer lows; the distant waterfall
 Swells in the breeze; and, with the hasty tread
 Of traveller, the hollow-sounding plain,
 Shakes from afar. The full ethereal round,
 Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
 Shines out intensely keen; and, all one cope
 Of starry glitter, glows from pole to pole.
 From pole to pole the rigid influence falls,
 Through the still night, incessant, heavy, strong,
 And seizes Nature fast. It freezes on;
 Till morn, late rising o'er the drooping world,

725

730

735 -

740

745

poems. A line—two words—may show that they are the Muses' sons. How exquisitely does Burns picture to our eyes moonlight water undergoing an ice-change!

"The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
 Crept gently crusting o'er the glittering stream!"

Thomson does it with an almost finer spirit of perception—or conception—or memory—or whatever else you choose to call it; for our part, we call it genius:

"An icy gale, oft-shifting, o'er the pool
 Breathes a blue film, and in its mid career
 Arrests the bickering stream."

And afterwards, having frozen the entire stream into a "crystal pavement," how gloriously doth he conclude thus:

"*The whole imprison'd river growls below.*"

725. *Bickering*: Rippling, moving with a tremulous surface

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Lifts her pale eye, unjoyous. Then appears
The various labor of the silent night :
Prone from the dripping eave, and dumb cascade,
Whose idle torrents only seem to roar,
The pendent icicle ; the frost-work fair,

760

750. *The pendent icicle, &c.* : The most beautiful specimen of *pendent icicle and frost-work fair* that Nature has perhaps ever displayed, at least in this hemisphere, was that which occurred in Massachusetts, at Amherst, in the winter of 1849, and of which Dr. Hitchcock, President of Amherst College, has furnished a most graphic account in his admirable Lecture on the "Coronation of Winter," from which I am happy here to present an extract, not having space for the whole account. I pass over what he says of the antecedents of the spectacle, and of the spectacle itself for the first three days, excepting one sentence, in which he describes it thus : "If the twigs of every tree and shrub and spire had been literally covered with diamonds of the purest water, and largest known size, say an inch in diameter, they would not, I am sure, have poured upon the eye in the sunlight a more dazzling splendor." He proceeds to say :

I could not believe that any more splendid developments of this phenomenon awaited me. But on Saturday night the thermometer sunk to zero, and on Sunday morning the sun arose in a cloudless sky, and the icy shoots and pendants, more thoroughly crystallized by the intense cold, formed ten thousand points of overwhelming brightness on every side. Nor were all the sparkling brilliants, as on the day before, of colorless light. But here and there I began to notice the prismatic colors ; now exhibiting a gem of most splendid sapphire blue ; next one of amethystine purple ; next one of intense topaz yellow ; then a sea-green beryl, changing, by a slight change of posture, into a rich emerald green ; and then one of deep hyacinth red. As the sun approached the meridian, the number and splendor of these colored gems increased ; so that on a single tree hundreds of them might be seen, and sometimes so large was their size, and intense their color, that at a distance of fifty rods they seemed equal to Sirius, nay, to the morning star ! and of hues the most delicate and rich that can be conceived of, exactly imitating, so far as I could judge, the natural gems ; and not partaking at all of those less delicate and gaudy tints, by which a practised eye can distinguish genuine from supposititious precious stones. And by moving the eye a few inches, we could see these different colors pass into one another, and thus witness the rich intermediate shades. I have seen many splendid groups of precious stones, wrought and unwrought, in the large collections of our land ; and until I witnessed this scene, they seemed of great beauty ; but it is now literally true that they appeared to me comparatively dull and insignifi-

Where transient hues and fancied figures rise ;
Wide-spouted o'er the hill, the frozen brook,
A livid tract, cold gleaming on the morn ;
The forest bent beneath the ~~winter~~ plumpy wave ;
And by the frost refined the ~~winter~~ snow,

755

cant. In short, it seemed as if I was gazing upon a landscape which had before existed only in a poet's imagination. It is what he would call a fairy land ; but a more Christian designation would be, a celestial land.

On Monday it was cloudy, and the phenomena presented no new aspect. On Tuesday there was a storm of fine rain and snow, and the beautiful transparency of the icy coat was changed into the aspect of ground glass. This gave to the trees a new and more delicate appearance. They resembled engraved work, formed of pure unburnished silver ; and had the sun shone upon them, they must have been intensely beautiful. I now supposed that the most brilliant part of this scene—its golden period—had passed, and that the silver period of Tuesday would soon be succeeded by the usual iron reign of Winter, especially as there fell several inches of snow during the night. But the cold restored the ice upon the trees to more than its original transparency, and the sun rose on Wednesday morning upon a cloudless sky ; and a wind scattered the snow from the branches, and all the phenomena opened upon us with more than their sabbath-day glories.

As the sun approached the meridian, one had only to receive his rays at a certain angle, refracted through the crystal covering of a tree, in order to witness gems more splendid than art ever prepared. Four-fifths of them were diamonds, but the sapphires were numerous ; the topaz and the beryl not infrequent, and occasionally the chrysolite and the hyacinth shone with intense brilliancy. There was wind also on that day ; and as the branches waved to and fro, these various gems appeared and vanished, and re-appeared in endless variety ; chaining the eye to the spot, until the overpowered optic nerve shrunk from its office. But the rich vision did not cease through all that cloudless day. Nor did it terminate when the sun went down ; for then the full-orbed moon arose, and gave another most bewitching aspect to the scene. During the day the light had been painfully intense ; but the softness of moonlight permitted the eye to gaze and gaze untired, and yet the splendor seemed hardly less than through the day. Most of the bright points were of a mild topaz yellow, and when seen against the heavens could hardly be distinguished from the stars ; or when seen in the forest, especially as one passed rapidly along, it seemed as if countless fire-flies were moving among the branches. Yet, occasionally, I saw other colors of the spectrum, especially the bluish-green of the beryl. Through that live-long night did these indescribable glories meet the eye of the observer. And on Thurs-

Incrusted hard, and sounding to the tread
 Of early shepherd, as he pensive seeks
 His pining flock, or from the mountain top,
 Pleased with the slippery surface, swift descends.

SPORTS ON THE ICE AND SNOW.

On blithesome frolics bent, the youthful swains, 760
 While every work of man is laid at rest,
 Fond o'er the river crowd, in various sport
 And revelry dissolved ; where mixing glad,
 Happiest of all the train ! the raptured boy
 Lashes the whirling top. Or, where the Rhine 765
 Branch'd out in many a long canal extends;
 From every province swarming, void of care,
 Batavia rushes forth : and, as they sweep,
 On sounding skates, a thousand different ways,
 In circling poise, swift as the winds, along, 770
 The then gay land is madden'd all to joy.
 Nor less the northern courts, wide o'er the snow

day another cloudless morning and clear shining sun brought back the glories of Wednesday: nay, to my eye this last day of the spectacle seemed the most splendid of all; and one could hardly realize that he was not translated to some celestial region.

Job speaks of the balancing of the clouds as among the mysteries of ancient philosophy ; but how much nicer the balancing and counterbalancing of the complicated agencies of the atmosphere, in order to bring out this glacial miracle in its full perfection ! What wisdom and power, short of infinite, could have brought it about ! and when, we may ask, shall it be witnessed again ? Hardly dare we hope, during our short lives, again to see the time when all the requisite contingencies shall conspire to bring this identical phenomenon before us, that we may feast our eyes with its beauties. Let us be thankful that we have seen it once, and for so many days, and under so many phases ; and let us not fail to learn from it a new and impressive lesson of the infinite skill and benevolence of the Author of Nature.

768. *Batavia* : Here used for the people of Batavia, or *Holland*, which abounds in canals.

772. *Northern courts* : The nobility of the northern countries of Europe.

Pour a new pomp. Eager, on rapid sleds,
 Their vigorous youth in bold contention wheel
 The long resounding course. Meantime to raise
 The manly strife, with highly blooming charms,
 Flush'd by the season, Scandinavia's dames,
 Or Russia's buxom daughters, glow around.

Pure, quick, and sportful is the wholesome day ;
 But soon elapsed. The horizontal sun,

Broad o'er the south, hangs at his utmost noon,
 And, ineffectual, strikes the gelid cliff.

His azure gloss the mountain still maintains,
 Nor feels the feeble touch. Perhaps the vale
 Relents a while to the reflected ray ;

Or from the forest falls the cluster'd snow,
 Myriads of gems, that in the waving gleam
 Gay twinkle as they scatter. Thick around
 Thunders the sport of those, who with the gun,
 And dog impatient bounding at the shot,
 Worse than the Season, desolate the fields ;
 And, adding to the ruins of the year,
 Distress the footed or the feather'd game.

775

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785

790

WINTER SCENES IN THE FRIGID ZONE.

But what is this ? our infant Winter sinks
 Divested of his grandeur, should our eye
 Astonish'd shoot into the frigid zone ;
 Where, for relentless months, continual night
 Holds o'er the glittering waste her starry reign.

There, through the prison of unbounded wilds,
 Barr'd by the hand of Nature from escape,
 Wide roams the Russian exile. Naught around

795

800

777. *Scandinavia*: This is the ancient name for Sweden and Norway, formerly united in one kingdom.

- Strikes his sad eye but deserts lost in snow,
And heavy-loaded groves, and solid floods,
That stretch, athwart the solitary vast,
Their icy horrors to the frozen main ; 805
And cheerless towns far distant, never bless'd,
Save when its annual course the caravan
Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay
With news of humankind. Yet there life glows ;
Yet cherish'd there, beneath the shining waste, 810
The fury nations harbor : tipp'd with jet,
Fair ermines, spotless as the snows they press ;
Sables, of glossy black ; and dark-embrown'd,
Or beauteous freak'd with many a mingled hue,
Thousands besides, the costly pride of courts. 815
There, warm together press'd, the trooping deer
Sleep on the new-fallen snows ; and, scarce his head

808. *Cathay* : The name formerly given to China.

812. *Ermine* : A species of *Mustela*, or *Stoat*, differing from the common weazel in being about one-third larger, and in having a somewhat broader head and a longer tail. In the summer season the upper part of the head, neck, and body, and the greater part of the tail, are of a pale reddish-brown color ; tip of the tail black, and somewhat bushy. In the winter the whole of the body becomes white, slightly tinged with yellow ; but the black termination of the tail is permanent. The fur is closer and finer at this season, especially in the colder latitudes, from which countries the ermine affords one of the most beautiful and valuable of furs. When made up, the tails are inserted one to each skin, at regular distances, and in the quincunx order ; and thus arranged the ermine fur forms the distinctive doubling of the state robes of sovereigns and nobles, as well as of their crowns and coronets.—BRANDE.

813. *Sable* : A small quadruped, allied to the martin-cat, celebrated for the fine quality and rich color of its fur, of which the hairs turn with equal ease in every direction. A single skin of the darker color, though not above four inches broad, has been valued as high as fifteen pounds sterling. The sable is principally a native of the northern regions of Asia : it is hunted and killed for the Russian market, either by a single ball, a blunt arrow, or traps, by exiles or soldiers sent for that purpose in the deserts of Siberia. A nearly allied animal, called "the fisher," inhabits North America, and is similarly sought after, and destroyed for its fur.—BRANDE.

Raised o'er the heapy wreath, the branching elk
Lies slumbering sullen in the white abyss.

The ruthless hunter wants nor dogs nor toils ;
Nor with the dread of sounding bows he drives
The fearful, flying race : with ponderous clubs,
As weak against the mountain heaps they push
Their beating breast in vain, and piteous bray,
He lays them quivering on th' ensanguined snows,
And with loud shouts rejoicing bears them home.
There through the piny forest, half absorb'd,
Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear,
With dangling ice all horrid, stalks forlorn.

Slow-paced, and sourer as the storms increase,
He makes his bed beneath the inclement drift,
And, with stern patience, scorning weak complaint,
Hardens his heart against assailing want.

Wide o'er the spacious regions of the north,
That see Boötes urge his tardy wain,

A boisterous race, by frosty Caurus pierced,
Who little pleasure know and fear no pain,

Prolific swarm. They once relumed the flame
Of lost mankind in polish'd slavery sunk ;

Drove martial horde on horde, with dreadful sweep
Resistless rushing o'er th' enfeebled south,

And gave the vanquish'd world another form.
Not such the sons of Lapland : wisely they
Despise th' insensate, barbarous trade of war ;

They ask no more than simple Nature gives ;

820

825

830

835

438

840

845

835. *Boötes*: Bear-driver, one of the northern constellations. *Wain* : Wagon.

836. *Caurus* : The northwest wind.

840. *Horde on horde* : The wandering Scythian clans -the Huns, Vandals, &c.—that originally occupied the northern part of Asia and the northeastern section of Europe, and thence made incursions into southern and western Europe—entirely changing the political and social aspect, and literature, of the countries they overrun and subdued.

They love their mountains, and enjoy their storms.

No false desires, no pride-created wants,
Disturb the peaceful current of their time,
And through the restless, ever tortured maze
Of pleasure or ambition, bid it rage.

850

Their reindeer form their riches. These their tents,
Their robes, their beds, and all their homely wealth
Supply; their wholesome fare and cheerful cups.
Obsequious at their call, the docile tribe

Yield to the sled their necks, and whirl them swift
O'er hill and dale, heap'd into one expanse
Of marbled snow, as far as eye can sweep,
With a blue crust of ice unbounded glazed.

855

By dancing meteors then, that ceaseless shake

351. Reindeer: The singular usefulness of this animal in a great measure recompenses the Laplander for the privation of the other comforts of life. The reindeer in summer live upon leaves and grass, and in winter upon moss, which they dig up from under the snow; yet upon such scanty fare they will perform a journey of inconceivable length. The animal is fixed to a kind of sledge, shaped like a small boat, in which the traveller, well secured from cold, is laced down; and taking the reins, which are fastened to the horns of the animal, in one hand, and a kind of bludgeon, to keep the carriage clear of ice and snow, in the other, he sets out and continues his journey with incredible speed (200 miles a day), the animals choosing the road and directing their course with very little trouble to the traveller. Their milk and cheese are nutritive and pleasant; their flesh is well-tasted food, whether fresh or dried; their skin forms excellent clothing both for the bed and body; and their intestines and tendons supply their masters with thread and cordage.

The maritime districts of Lapland are of uniform and rather mild temperature; but in the interior the winter is intensely cold: in the most northern parts the sun remains below the horizon from the 20th of November to the 10th of January; and the whole country is covered with snow and ice from the beginning of September to the middle of March. In summer the sun continues two months above the horizon; and in the valleys and plains the heat is excessive, favoring the production of numerous insects, particularly the mosquitoes, which greatly infest the inhabitants. Like the Icelanders, they consider their country the finest in the universe.—BROOKES.

359. Dancing meteors: These are generally supposed to proceed from

- A waving blaze, refracted o'er the heavens, 860
 And vivid moons, and stars that keener play
 With double lustre from the glossy waste,
 E'en in the depth of polar night, they find
 A wondrous day; enough to light the chase,
 Or guide their daring steps to Finland fairs. 865
- Wish'd Spring returns; and from the hazy south,
 While dim Aurora slowly moves before,
 The welcome sun, just verging up at first,
 By small degrees extends the swelling curve;
 Till seen at last for gay rejoicing months, 870
 Still round and round his spiral course he winds,
 And as he nearly dips his flaming orb,
 Wheels up again, and reascends the sky!
 In that glad season, from the lakes and floods,
 Where pure Niemi's fairy mountains rise, 875

electricity. From Flint's Lectures, I derive the following illustration:— Electricity is the sun of the poles, like that planet imparting life and animation to the atmosphere and the earth. Under its influence, as if fostered by the solar ray, plants acquire hardihood, life, energy, and enjoyment, and the blood a rapidity of circulation which prevents the inclemency of the climate from being felt. Every one knows that the polar year is composed of one day and one night. The sun ascends the sky at the vernal equinox, and holds its revolutions above the horizon for six months. It then slowly disappears; but a long and beautiful twilight softens the gloom of its departure as it preceded its coming. As soon as all traces of the glorious planet have disappeared, innumerable varying luminous spectacles kindle in the sky. Flames of a thousand hues, glittering globes, and scarfs of light flash across the extent of the heavens. These meteors silently traverse the celestial spaces, uniting in the zenith, where they form porticoes, arches, and gulfs of fire. One wide conflagration seems to fill the heavens, where Aurora Borealis reigns the superb aerial meteor of the ascendant. See note on 903.

875. *Niemi*: M. De Maupertius, in his book on the Figure of the Earth, after having described the beautiful lake and mountain of Niemi, in Lapland, says: "From this height we had opportunity several times to see those vapors rise from the lake, which the people of the country call Hal-tios, and which they deem to be the guardian spirits of the mountains. We had been frightened with stories of bears that haunted this place, but

And fringed with roses Tenglio rolls his stream,
 They draw the copious fry. With these, at eve,
 They, cheerful loaded, to their tents repair ;
 Where, all day long in useful cares employ'd,
 Their kind, unblemish'd wives the fire prepare. 880
 Thrice happy race ! by poverty secured
 From legal plunder and rapacious power ;
 In whom fell interest never yet has sown
 The seeds of vice ; whose spotless swains ne'er knew
 Injurious deed ; nor blasted by the breath 885
 Of faithless love, their blooming daughters woe.

THE AWFUL GRANDEUR OF THE POLAR REGIONS.

Still pressing on, beyond Tornea's lake,
 And Hecla flaming through a waste of snow,
 And furthest Greenland, to the pole itself,
 Where, failing gradual, life at length goes out, 890
 The Muse expands her solitary flight ;
 And, hovering o'er the wild stupendous scene,
 Beholds new seas beneath another sky.
 Throned in his palace of cerulean ice,
 Here Winter holds his unrejoicing court ; 895

saw none. It seemed rather a place of resort for fairies and genii, than bears."

876. *Tenglio* : The same author observes : " I was surprised to see upon the banks of this river (the Tenglio) roses of as lively a red as any that are in our gardens."

877. *Tornea's lake* : Tornea, a river of Sweden, takes its rise in the borders of Norway, and forms a lake bearing the same name, and then flows southeast into the Gulf of Bothnia, below Tornea, a place of some trade under the government of Finland.

878. *Hecla* is a volcanic mountain in Iceland. This island is a dependency of Denmark, and contains some other volcanoes, the action of which in 1783 exceeded in violence and terror any other eruptions that are on record.

879. *Another sky* : The other hemisphere. Digitized by Google

And through his airy hall the loud misrule
 Of driving tempest is forever heard :
 Here the grim tyrant meditates his wrath ;
 Here arms his winds with all-subduing frost ;
 Moulds his fierce hail, and treasures up his snows, 900
 With which he now oppresses half the globe.

Thence, winding eastward to the Tartar's coast,
 She sweeps the howling margin of the main ;
 Where, undissolving, from the first of time,
 Snows swell on snows amazing to the sky ; 905
 And icy mountains, high on mountains piled,
 Seem to the shivering sailor from afar,
 Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds.
 Projected huge and horrid o'er the surge,
 Alps frown on Alps ; or, rushing hideous down, 910
 (As if old Chaos was again return'd,)
 Wide rend the deep, and shake the solid pole.
 Ocean itself no longer can resist
 The binding fury ; but in all its rage

908. *Main* : The ocean lying to the north of Asia. At the North Cape (says Bucke), Acerbi felt as if all the cares of life had vanished ; worldly pursuits assumed the character of dreams ; the forms and energies of animated nature seemed to fade away, and the earth appeared as if it were about to revert to its original elements (911). A solemn magnificence, an interminable space, wearing the aspect of infinity, characterized the scene. The billows dashed in awful grandeur against rocks coeval with the globe ; marine birds, wild in character and dissonant in language, skimmed along their girdles ; the moon shed her solemn lustre on their dark and frowning pyramids ; the stars glowed with burnished brilliancy ; and the *Aurora Borealis* added terrific interest to the gloomy majesty of the whole.

And what (he adds) can be more awful, and, at the same time, more beautiful, than the wild and mysterious motions and colors which this polar phenomenon presents ! sometimes covering with inconceivable magnificence the concave of the whole hemisphere, changing its positions every moment ; now resembling vast pyramids, or stretching into innumerable columns, varying their shapes and hues with astonishing rapidity and with endless caprice ; now vanishing in an instant, leaving the heavens sombre and black ; and again suddenly returning with increased splendor, shedding a matchless glory over the whole sky.

- Of tempest, taken by the boundless frost, 915
 Is many a fathom to the bottom chain'd,
 And bid to roar no more : a bleak expanse,
 Shagg'd o'er with wavy rocks, cheerless and void
 Of every life, that from the dreary months
 Flies conscious southward. Miserable they ! 920
 Who, here entangled in the gathering ice,
 Take their last look of the descending sun ;
 While, full of death and fierce with tenfold frost,
 The long, long night, incumbent o'er their heads,
 Falls horrible. Such was the Briton's fate, 925
 As with first prow (what have not Britons dared ?)
 He for the passage sought, attempted since
 So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
 By jealous nature with eternal bars.
 In these fell regions in Arzina caught, 930
 And to the stony deep his idle ship

925. *Briton's fate* : Sir Hugh Willoughby, sent by Queen Elizabeth to discover the northeast passage.

930-935. *In these fell regions, &c.* : To prepare the way for a criticism on this admirable passage, Prof. Wilson observes :—How pleasant to see the peculiar genius of Cowper contrasted with that of Thomson. The gentle Cowper delighting, for the most part, in tranquil images—for his life was passed amidst tranquil nature ; the enthusiastic Thomson more pleased with images of power. Cowper says :

“ On the flood,
 Indurated and fix'd, the snowy weight
 Lies undissolved while silently beneath
 And unperceived the current steals away.”

How many thousand times the lines we are now going to quote have been quoted, nobody can tell ; but we quote them once more for the purpose of asking you, if you think any one poet of this age could have written them—could have chilled one's very soul as well as body, with such intense feeling of cold ! Not one.

“ In these fell regions, in Arzina caught,
 And to the stony deep his idle ship
 Immediate seal'd, he with his hapless crew,
 Each full exerted at his several task,
 Frost into statues—to the cordage glued
 The sailor, and the pilot to his helm ! ”

Immediate seal'd, he with his hapless crew,
 Each full exerted at his several task,
 Froze into statues ; to the cordage glued
 The sailor, and the pilot to the helm.

935

Hard by these shores, where scarce his freezing stream
 Rolls the wild Oby, live the last of men ;
 And, half enliven'd by the distant sun,
 That rears and ripens man as well as plants,
 Here human Nature wears its rudest form.

940

Deep from the piercing season sunk in caves,
 Here by dull fires, and with unjoyous cheer,
 They waste the tedious gloom. Immersed in furs,
 Doze the gross race. Nor sprightly jest, nor song,
 Nor tenderness they know ; nor aught of life
 Beyond the kindred bears that stalk without ;
 Till morn at length, her roses drooping all,

945

The oftener—the more we read the “Winter”—especially the last two or three hundred lines—the angrier is our wonder with Wordsworth for asserting that Thomson owed the national popularity that his “Winter” immediately won, to his commonplace sentimentalities, and his vicious style ! Yet true it is that he was sometimes guilty of both ; and, but for his transcendent genius, they might have obscured the lustre of his fame. But such sins are not very frequent in the “Seasons,” and were all committed in the glow of that fine and bold enthusiasm, which, to his imagination, arrayed all things, and all words, in a light that seemed to him at the time to be poetry—though sometimes it was but “false glitter.” Besides, he was but young ; and his great work was his first. He had not philosophized his language into poetry, as Wordsworth himself has done, after long years of profoundest study of the laws of thought and speech. But in such study, while much is gained, is not something lost ? And is there not a charm in the free, flowing, chartered libertinism of the diction and versification of the “Seasons”—above all, in the closing strains of the “Winter,” and in the whole of the “Hymn,” which inspires a delight and wonder, that is seldom breathed upon us—glorious poem, on the whole, as it is—from the more measured march of the “Excursion.”

937. *Oby* : the largest river of Siberia—1900 miles long, and navigable nearly the whole distance. *The last of men* occupy its shores, that is, none are found north of this region.

Sheds a long twilight brightening o'er their field,
And calls the quiver'd savage to the chase.

1A

PETER THE GREAT, OF RUSSIA. X

What cannot active government perform, 950
 New moulding man? Wide stretching from these shores,
 A people savage from remotest time,
 A huge neglected empire, one vast mind,
 By Heaven inspired, from Gothic darkness call'd.
 Immortal Peter! first of monarchs! he 955

955. *Immortal Peter*: a monarch of singular energy and originality of character, to whom, more than to any other of her monarchs, Russia stands indebted for the promotion of her national interests. The services which he performed are admirably stated by Thomson, and with great fulness of detail, yet some of the points admit of a happy illustration from the pages of Russell's *Modern Europe*. Several princes (says this historian), before this illustrious barbarian, disgusted with the pursuits of ambition, or tired with sustaining the load of public affairs, had renounced their crowns, and taken refuge in the shade of indolence, or of philosophical retirement; but history affords no example of any sovereign who had divested himself of the royal character in order to learn the art of governing better: that was a stretch of magnanimity reserved for Peter the Great. Though almost destitute himself of education, he discovered, by the natural force of his genius, and a few conversations with strangers, his own rude state and the savage condition of his subjects. He resolved to become worthy of the character of a MAN, to see men, and to have men to govern. Animated by the noble ambition of acquiring instruction, and of carrying back to his people the improvements of other nations, he accordingly quitted his dominions in 1697, as a private gentleman in the retinue of three ambassadors whom he sent to different courts of Europe.

As soon as Peter arrived at Amsterdam, which was the first place that particularly attracted his notice, he applied himself to the study of commerce and the mechanical arts; and, in order more completely to acquire the art of ship-building, he entered himself as a carpenter in one of the principal dock-yards, and labored and lived in all respects, as the common journeymen. At his leisure hours he studied natural philosophy, navigation, fortification, surgery, and such other sciences as may be necessary to the sovereign of a barbarous people. From Holland he passed over to England, where he perfected himself in the art of ship-building. King William, in order to gain his favor, entertained him with a naval review,

His stubborn country tamed ; her rocks, her fens,
 Her floods, her seas, her ill-submitting sons ;
 And while the fierce barbarian he subdued,
 To more exalted soul he raised the man.

Ye shades of ancient heroes, ye who toil'd
 Through long, successive ages to build up
 A laboring plan of state, behold at once

The wonder done ! behold the matchless prince !
 Who left his native throne, where reign'd till then
 A mighty shadow of unreal power ;

Who greatly spurn'd the slothful pomp of courts ;
 And roaming every land, in every port
 His sceptre laid aside, with glorious hand
 Unwearied plying the mechanic tool,
 Gather'd the seeds of trade, of useful arts,

Of civil wisdom, and of martial skill.

Charged with the stores of Europe, home he goes !

Then cities rise amid th' illumined waste ;
O'er joyless deserts smiles the rural reign ;

Far distant flood to flood is social join'd ;
 Th' astonish'd Euxine hears the Baltic roar ;
 Proud navies ride on seas that never foam'd
 With daring keel before ; and armies stretch
 Each way their dazzling files, repressing here

The frantic Alexander of the North,

960

965

970

975

980

made him a present of an elegant yacht, and permitted him to engage in his service a number of ingenious artificers. Thus instructed, and attended by several men of science, Peter returned to Russia, after an absence of nearly two years, with all the useful and many of the ornamental arts in his train.

By his wise agency the arts and sciences were introduced into his then barbarous empire ; in 1724 the first university was established. In the next year Peter died ; and it has been justly said, that perhaps no country ever exhibited in so short a time, the wonders that may be effected by the genius and exertions of one man.

980. *Alexander of the North* : Charles XII., of Sweden, who directed his great military energies chiefly against Peter the Great, and the Turks.

And awing there stern Othman's shrinking sons,
 Sloth flies the land, and ignorance, and vice,
 Of old dishonor proud. It glows around,
 Taught by the Royal Hand that roused the whole,

He was a man of daring courage and singular success in his military enterprises. He made war his business and his glory. His death occurred in circumstances which show the warlike and intrepid character of this fighting monarch. He had placed himself with his army before Fredericshall, in Norway, in the month of December, when the cold was so extreme that many of his soldiers on duty dropped down dead; but, to animate his army, he exposed himself to all the severities of the weather, and slept even in the open air, with simply his cloak wrapped about him. As he was surveying by starlight, one night, the operations of his army making their approach to the place, he was killed by a ball from the enemy's cannon. The moment he received the blow, though it became almost instantly fatal, it is said that he grasped instinctively the hilt of his sword, and was found dead with his hand in that position, so characteristic of the master-passion of his soul.

During one of his campaigns against Peter, a proposal of peace was sent to him by the latter, to which he arrogantly replied: "I will treat at Moscow"—meaning that he would make peace when he had conquered the capital of the Czar. "My brother Charles," replied the Czar, when this answer was conveyed to him, "always affects to play the Alexander; but he will not, I hope, find in me a Darius." Charles, with all the bravery and self-confidence of Alexander, but without his wisdom and foresight, attempted, without adequate preparations, to march to Moscow; and the Czar defeated his purpose by destroying the roads and laying waste the country.

In the opinion of Russell, "no prince perhaps ever had fewer weaknesses, or possessed so many eminent with so few amiable qualities, as Charles XII., of Sweden. Rigidly just, but void of lenity; romantically brave, but blind to consequences; profusely generous, without knowing how to oblige; temperate without delicacy; and chaste without acquiring the praise of continence, because he seems to have been insensible to the charms of the sex; a stranger to the pleasures of society, and but slightly acquainted with books; a Goth in his manners, and a savage in his resentments; resolute even to obstinacy, inexorable in vengeance, and inaccessible to sympathy, he has little to conciliate our love or esteem. But his wonderful intrepidity and perseverance in enterprise, his firmness under misfortune, his contempt of danger, and his enthusiastic passion for glory, will ever command our admiration."

981. *Othman*, a distinguished ruler of the Turks in the early part of the fourteenth century. The Turks are here called his sons.

One scene of arts, of arms, of rising trade : 985
 For what his wisdom plann'd, and power enforced,
 More potent still, his great example show'd.

FROST SUCCEEDED BY A THAW.

Muttering, the winds at eve, with blunted point,
 Blow hollow blustering from the south. Subdued, 990
 The frost resolves into a trickling thaw.
 Spotted the mountains shine ; loose sleet descends,
 And floods the country round. The rivers swell,
 Of bonds impatient. Sudden from the hills,
 O'er rocks and woods, in broad, brown cataracts,
 A thousand snow-fed torrents shoot at once ; 995
 And, where they rush, the wide-resounding plain
 Is left one slimy waste. Those sullen seas,
 That wash'd th' ungenial pole, will rest no more
 Beneath the shackles of the mighty north ;
 But, rousing all their waves, resistless heave. 1000
 And hark ! the lengthening roar continuous runs
 Athwart the rifted deep ; at once it bursts,
 And piles a thousand mountains to the clouds.
 Ill fares the bark, with trembling wretches charged
 That, toss'd amid the floating fragments, moors 1005
 Beneath the shelter of an icy isle ;
 While night o'erwhelms the sea, and horror looks
 More horrible. Can human force endure
 Th' assembled mischiefs that besiege them round :
 Heart-gnawing hunger, fainting weariness, 1010
 The roar of winds and waves, the crush of ice,
 Now ceasing, now renew'd with louder rage,
 And in dire echoes bellowing round the main ?
 More to embroil the deep, Leviathan,

And his unwieldy train, in dreadful sport, 1015

Tempest the loosen'd brine; while through the gloom,
Far from the bleak, inhospitable shore,
Loading the winds, is heard the hungry howl
Of famish'd monsters, there awaiting wrecks.

Yet Providence, that ever-waking Eye, 1020
Looks down with pity on the feeble toil
Of mortals, lost to hope, and lights them safe,
Through all this dreary labyrinth of fate.

> THE SEASONS, A PICTURE OF HUMAN LIFE.

"Tis done! dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquer'd year. 1025
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies!
How dumb the tuneful! Horror wide extends
His desolate domain. Behold, fond man!

a description of this marine animal, which applies to the whale more closely than to any other monster of the deep.

1028-1041. *Behold, &c.*: What a noble and practical conclusion is here given to this admirable Poem! The author wisely seeks not only to store our minds with a knowledge of Nature and of men, but to give our thoughts a religious and profitable direction. He calls us to a contemplation of our own life as pictured in the scenes of the Seasons which he has so beautifully described. He reminds us that Autumn and Winter succeed to our Spring and our Summer: that former hopes have fled; that the bustling activities of vigorous manhood will give place to a more quiet mode of life; that all our schemes, but those which have virtue or religion as their basis, will prove evanescent and profitless. And as the opening Spring demonstrates the utilities of Winter, and vindicates the wisdom and benevolence of the great Author of the Seasons, so, in the future state of man, will be cleared up the mysteries of Divine Providence in the present comparatively wintry state of the Christian's existence. How consoling to the good, amid the adversities and sorrows of the present life, to listen to the concluding lines, in which they are so tenderly addressed:

" Yet bear up a while,
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deem'd evil, is no more:
The storms of Wintry Time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all!"

- See here thy pictured life : Pass some few years,
 Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength, 1030
 Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
 And pale concluding Winter comes at last,
 And shuts the scene. Ah ! whither now are fled
 Those dreams of greatness ? those unsolid hopes
 Of happiness ? those longings after fame ? 1035
 Those restless cares ? those busy, bustling days ?
 Those gay-spent, festive nights ? those veering thoughts,
 Lost between good and ill, that shared thy life ?
 All now are vanish'd ! Virtue sole survives,
 Immortal, never-failing friend of man, 1040
 His guide to happiness on high. And see !
 'Tis come, the glorious morn ! the second birth
 Of heaven and earth ! Awakening Nature hears
 The new-creating word, and starts to life,
 In every heighten'd form, from pain and death 1045
 Forever free. The great eternal scheme,
 Involving all, and in a perfect whole
 Uniting, as the prospect wider spreads,
 To reason's eye refined clears up apace.
 Ye vainly wise ! ye blind presumptuous ! now,
 Confounded in the dust, adore that Power 1050
 And Wisdom oft arraign'd : see now the cause,
 Why unassuming worth in secret lived,
 And died neglected ; why the good man's share
 In life was gall and bitterness of soul ;)
 Why the lone widow and her orphans pined
 In starving solitude, while Luxury, 1055
 In palaces, lay straining her low thought,
 To form unreal wants ; why heaven-born Truth,
 And Moderation fair, wore the red marks
 Of Superstition's scourge ; why licensed Pain,
 That cruel spoiler, that embosom'd foe,
 Embitter'd all our bliss. Ye good distress'd ! 1060

Don't be bent.
but he bent.
et al. 1055
Hannibal 1055
Philosophy

Ye noble few! who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up a while,
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deem'd evil, is no more:
The storms of Wintry Time will quickly pass.
And one unbounded Spring encircle all.

1065

HYMN ON THE SEASONS.

THOMSON'S "SEASONS" is as eminently a religious, as it is a descriptive poem. Thoroughly impressed with sentiments of veneration for the Author of that assemblage of order and beauty which it was his province to paint, he takes every proper occasion to excite similar emotions in the breasts of his readers. Entirely free from the gloom of superstition and the narrowness of bigotry, he everywhere represents the Deity as the kind and beneficent parent of all his works, always watching over their best interests, and from seeming evil always educating the greatest possible good to all his creatures. In every appearance of nature he beholds the operation of a Divine hand; and regards, according to his own emphatical phrase, each change throughout the revolving year as but the "varied God." This spirit, which breaks forth at intervals in each division of his poem, shines full and centred in the noble Hymn which crowns the work. This piece, the sublimest production of its kind since the days of Milton, should be considered as the winding up of all the variety of matter and design contained in the preceding parts; and thus is not only admirable as a separate composition, but is contrived with masterly skill to strengthen the unity and connection of the great whole.—AIKIN.

H Y M N.

THESE, as they change, ALMIGHTY FATHER, these
Are but the varied GOD. The rolling year
Is full of THEE. Forth in the pleasing Spring
THY beauty walks, THY tenderness and love.
Wide flush the fields ; the softening air is balm ; 5
Echo the mountains round ; the forest smiles ;
And every sense, and every heart is joy.
Then comes THY glory in the Summer months,
With light and heat resplendent. Then THY sun
Shoots full perfection through the swelling year ; 10
And oft THY VOICE in dreadful thunder speaks ;

2. *The varied God*: A concise and emphatic expression for the varied operations and manifestations of God.

3. *Is full of Thee* : This sentiment has been admirably illustrated by Dr. Duncan in his fourth volume of the "Seasons," as follows :—It is the sense of a present Deity which fills the heart with the deepest and purest emotion. When we trace his hand forming the elegant flower, and painting its blushing petals, or throwing the green carpet over the earth, or rearing the lofty forest, or spreading out the waters of the great deep, and prescribing the bounds which it cannot pass ; when we see Him shining in the sun, and giving glory to his morning, mid-day, and evening rays, or drawing the curtain of night, and pouring around us the softened brightness of ten thousand sparkling worlds ; when we hear Him whispering in the breeze, murmuring in the stream, or raising his awful voice in the rolling thunder, it is then that brute nature becomes animated, intelligent, and glorious ; the seen is but an indication of the unseen ; the inactive of the active ; the lifeless and unintellectual mass of all that is excellent in power, and wisdom, and goodness.

And oft at dawn, deep noon, or falling eve,
By brooks and groves, in hollow-whispering gales.

THY bounty shines in Autumn unconfined,
And spreads a common feast for all that lives.

15

In Winter awful THOU ; with clouds and storms
Around THEE thrown, tempest o'er tempest roll'd ;
Majestic darkness ! On the whirlwind's wing,
Riding sublime, THOU bidst the world adore,
And humblest Nature with THY northern blast.

20

Mysterious round ! what skill, what force divine,
Deep felt, in these appear ! a simple train,
Yet so delightful mix'd, with such kind art,
Such beauty and beneficence combined ;
Shade unperceived, so softening into shade ;

25

And all so forming an harmonious whole ;
That as they still succeed, they ravish still.

But wandering oft, with brute unconscious gaze,
Man marks not THEE, marks not the mighty Hand,
That, ever busy, wheels the silent sphere ;

30

Works in the secret deep ; shoots, steaming, thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the Spring ;
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day ;
Feeds every creature ; hurls the tempest forth ;
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,

35

With transport touches all the springs of life.

Nature, attend ! join, every living soul
Beneath the spacious temple of the sky,

In adoration join ; and, ardent, raise

One general song ! To HIM, ye vocal gales,

40

Breathe soft, whose spirit in your freshness breathes ;

Oh, talk of HIM in solitary glooms !

Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely waving pine

Fills the brown shade with a religious awe.

And ye, whose bolder note is heard afar,

45

Who shake th' astonish'd world, lift high to Heaven

Heaven



The impetuous song, and say from whom you call
His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills ;
And let me catch it as I muse along.
Ye headlong torrents, rapid and profound ; 50
Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze
Along the vale ; and thou, majestic main,
A secret world of wonders in thyself,
Sound HIS stupendous praise ; whose greater voice
Or bids you roar or bids your roarings fall. 55
Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
In mingled clouds to HIM, whose sun exalts,
Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints.
Ye forests, bend ; ye harvests, wave to HIM ;
Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart, 60
As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.
Ye, that keep watch in heaven, as earth asleep
Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,
Ye constellations, while your angels strike,
Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre. 65
Great source of day ! best image here below
Of thy CREATOR, ever pouring wide,
From world to world, the vital ocean round,
On Nature write with every beam HIS praise.
The thunder rolls : be hush'd the prostrate world, 70
While cloud to cloud returns the solemn hymn.
Bleat out afresh, ye hills : ye mossy rocks,
Retain the sound : the broad responsive low,
Ye valleys, raise ; for the GREAT SHEPHERD reigns ;
And HIS unsuffering kingdom yet will come. 75
Ye woodlands all, awake : a boundless song

72. *Bleat out afresh, ye hills :* A reference is implied to the flocks that cover them, and by which the act is to be performed : so in the next two lines, the valleys are called upon to *raise the broad responsive low* (or lowing), that is, from the cattle grazing in them—in allusion to both of which, accordingly, God is immediately described as the *Great Shepherd*.

Burst from the groves ! and when the restless day,
 Expiring, lays the warbling world asleep,
 Sweetest of birds ! sweet Philomela, charm
 The listening shades, and teach the night his praise. 80

✓ Ye chief, for whom the whole creation smiles.
 At once the head, the heart, and tongue of all,
 Crown the great hymn. In swarming cities vast,
 Assembled men, to the deep organ join
 The long resounding voice, oft breaking clear, 85
 At solemn pauses, through the swelling base ;
 And, as each mingling flame increases each,
 In one united ardor rise to Heaven.

Or, if you rather choose the rural shade,
 And find a fane in every sacred grove ; 90
 There let the shepherd's flute, the virgin's lay,
 The prompting seraph, and the poet's lyre,
 Still sing the God of Seasons as they roll ! — |
 For me, when I forget the darling theme,
 Whether the blossom blows; the Summer ray 95
 Tassets the plain, inspiring Autumn gleams,
 Or Winter rises in the blackening east ;
 Be my tongue mute, my fancy paint no more,
 And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat !

Should fate command me to the furthest verge 100
 Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,
 Rivers unknown to song ; where first the sun
 Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
 Flames on th' Atlantic isles ; 'tis naught to me ;

79. *Philomela* : The nightingale, much celebrated by the British Muse, as the sweet bird of night. The name was derived from the fable of Philomela, a daughter of an Athenian king, being changed into a nightingale.

81. *Ye chief* : The human race is here addressed.

100-18. It would be folly to attempt to enhance the effect of this closing paragraph by an exposition. It makes its appeal intelligibly to the humblest understanding, and finds its way irresistibly to every heart. It is equally beautiful in language, and sublime and elevating in sentiment.

- Since God is ever present, ever felt, 105
 In the void waste as in the city full ;
 And where He vital breathes there must be joy.
 When e'en at last the solemn hour shall come,
 And wing my mystic flight to future worlds,
 I cheerful will obey ; there, with new powers, 110
 Will rising wonders sing. I cannot go
 Where Universal Love not smiles around,
 Sustaining all yon orbs, and all their suns ;
 From seeming evil still educating good,
 And better thence again, and better still, 115
 In infinite progression. But I lose
 Myself in Him, in light ineffable !
 Come then, expressive Silence, muse his praise.

While none can withhold his sympathy from the enraptured poet, whose theme rises even beyond his loftiest conceptions, so that, in despair of making an adequate exhibition of it, he exclaims—

“Come then, expressive Silence, muse his praise,”

I feel disposed, in reference also to the poet himself, in the production of this incomparable Hymn, so just in its praises of the great Author of all good, to make no further comments, but invoke *expressive Silence* to “muse his praise.”

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